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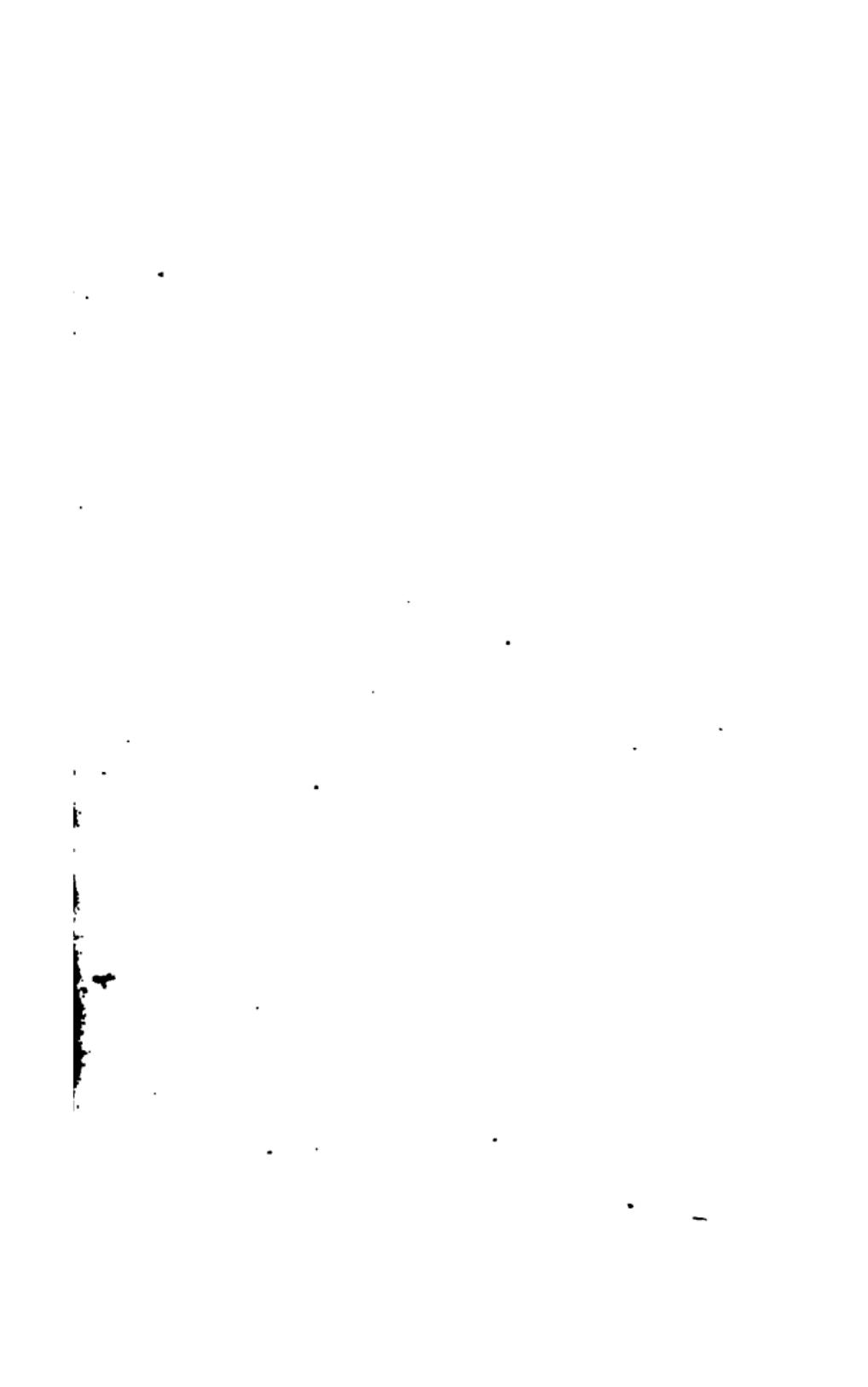


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ENGRAVED BY S. ALLEN.

The Principle of Radical Reform
is this, that every Man reform
himself; and then, and not till
then, shall we have an universal
reformation.

Benj: Shillingford.

SACRED PHILOSOPHY,

OR,

THOUGHTS ON THE CREATION.

WITH REMARKS ON

The Responsibility of Man, his Fall, his Restoration; the Cherubim and Flaming Sword at the East of Eden; the Errors of Modern Geologists; the Death of Abel; the Curse and Mark upon Cain; the Deluge; the Rainbow; the Patriarch Abraham; Jacob and Esau; the History of Joseph; Joshua commanding the Sun to stand still; the Sun going back ten degrees on the Dial of Ahaz; Samson's extraordinary Strength; the Evidence of Prophecy; the Excellency of Pure Christianity; the Spirit of Popery and Infidelity; and the Present Signs of the Times.

BY

BENJAMIN SHILLINGFORD.



MDCCCXL.



PAINTED BY B. SHILLINGFORD.

The Principle
is this, that
himself; and
then, shall we
reformation
Bony.

INTRODUCTION.

the author of this work having had frequent occasion to combat the absurd and blasphemous assertions of infidels and atheists to the philosophical portion of the Bible, has at last determined upon committing his thoughts to paper, being, through the blessing of God, they may be a benefit to his fellow creatures. And, having invariably found that the major portion of those books which have been written on the same subject, are published at such an extravagant price, and are likewise so abstruse and profuse in their composition, that common readers neither procure them, nor find time or patience to read them, he was further induced to plify the subject, by giving his own ideas, as they have occurred to him while pondering over the Mosaic account of the creation; and, if the deductions he has drawn therefrom, perfectly unbiased by any preconceived opinion, be in accordance with those of any other author, it will be a satisfaction to him to know that others think alike with him. But he can aver, that the matter contained in this book is not borrowed from any

other work, excepting where he has had occasion to refer for historical facts ; nor has he ever read any treatise on the subject, for the reasons above stated, excepting Mr. Pike's *Philosophia Sacra* ; which, although an able work, he considers, after having carefully perused it, to be rather too much strained, and the Hebrew quotations too much accommodated to suit that author's peculiar sentiments. Therefore, in this work he has been very careful that his deductions should be natural ideas, drawn from the common sense meaning of the original Hebrew text ; and as such he presents them to the public—with remarks likewise upon the responsibility of man, his fall, his restoration, &c. &c. —sincerely hoping that his humble effort may prove a blessing to his fellow-creatures, and be the means of inducing many to search the scriptures for themselves ; which, if set about with an humble mind, dependent upon God for the light of his Spirit, and with the sincere desire of finding the truth, will amply repay them for their labour, and be the means of bringing their minds into a state of perfect peace in these perilous and troublesome times ;—times pregnant with infidel blasphemy, religious hypocrisy, papistical treachery, sensual socialism, political anarchy, &c.

And, if ever there was a time in which it was *especially needful* for the true church of Christ *to be circumspect* and watchful, it is the time

present, when Satan her adversary is presenting himself as an angel of light; when the hellish trio of infidelity, popery, and socialism, are undermining the protestant institutions of the land; and the poor grievously oppressed and persecuted by the professed advocates of liberty: when turbulent men are all busily engaged at the work of reforming their neighbours, while their personal reformation is quite neglected; when nominal professors of christianity with one hand subscribe to the support of church and state, and with the other oppress their servants in their wages, and rob their tradesmen of their lawful profits. Surely these are times for those who love Christ to be up and doing, by standing forth valiantly for the truth, in this effeminate and adulterous generation, full of idolatry and oppression.

The Lord Jesus Christ calls upon all his soldiers to do their duty, to cry aloud and spare not; for the day draweth nigh when all must give an account of the talents committed to their care. Therefore the author warns the wicked of their danger, and earnestly beseeches them to fly to the banner of Christ, who alone is the true refuge to shelter us from the stormy blast which is fast approaching; when "the sinners in Zion" will be afraid, and fearfulness will surprise the hypocrites; for "who among us shall dwell with *the devouring fire?* who among us shall dwell

“with everlasting burnings?” Who? “He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing of evil; he shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure.” Isa. xxxiii. 14.

Such, and only such, are they whose confidence remaineth firm in the most calamitous times. Therefore the author being firmly convinced that nothing but submission to the righteous government of Jesus Christ—by whom God hath made known his love, good will, and mercy, to our ruined world—can restore mankind to perfect happiness, he, depending upon the assistance of the Holy Spirit to direct him, has, according to the ability which God has given him, set about this work, with the sincere desire that it may prove a blessing to his fellow-creatures, by inducing many of them to study that which alone can (under the blessing of God) make them wise unto salvation. Such is the hearty desire of the author,

BENJAMIN SHILLINGFORD.

SACRED PHILOSOPHY.

IN commencing this work, I am not attempting to make an apology for the Bible, because it needs none; therefore I shall begin where the word of God begins.

At the first chapter of Genesis, first verse, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." But who is God? asks the atheist. Is not nature God, and God nature? has not nature always existed, and will it not always exist? Oh, what fools are atheists! What would be thought of a person producing a watch before a number of individuals, and, because no one could tell who made it, declare that it always had existed in that form; and if one should reply, it could not have been in existence unless some watchmaker had manufactured it, the other should make answer, why, is not the watch the maker, and the maker the watch? Would not such a person be instantly condemned as a fool and a madman? Yet such fools are atheists; who, because they cannot comprehend God, deny his existence, and jeeringly scoff at the idea of spiritual power, by vainly attempting to reduce every thing to materialism; whereas the word of God, and all nature, declares, that spirit alone is the

only thing containing intelligence and power. But the grand mystery how spiritual agency is carried on, or what the abstract principle of intelligence is, we know not, as all that we can know about the subject is only as it is manifested by its operations in matter; of which I shall treat at large as I go on.

THE AGITATION OF THE WATERS.

I would here remark, that God, the universal, omnipresent, omnipotent, Almighty Spirit, is alone the only true fountain of all spiritual life—and spirit alone is life; and the world without spirit would be nothing but an inanimate chaos, enveloped in total darkness. Such the Bible declares was the state of our earth, when God by his Spirit began to operate upon it.

Verse 2. "And the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." The passage, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," seems to have reference to the component parts of the confused chaos, namely, the earth and the waters. Now, the natural condition of water, if divested of that power of expansion which it acquired by virtue of the perfect fluid, (light,) the principle of heat or fire, would be ice, as the condition of the earth at the poles fully testifies; consequently, the dark chaos must have been covered or incrusted therewith, and the waters being in an icy or congealed condition, were in a state of inanimation; and, as the waters were the matter, part of which were destined to compose the substance of the forthcoming atmosphere, the Spirit

of God commenced operating upon them first: and as the text declares that darkness was upon the face of the deep, the first act of setting the confused chaos in order was the dispersing of that darkness; therefore it says, "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." So that the very first symptom of natural life is ascribed to spirit, not to matter.

THE CREATION OF LIGHT.

The next operation was the creation of light. Verse 3. "And God said, let there be light, and there was light;" or, according to the Hebrew, (וְיֻחַד אֹור) "be light, and there was light :" for the verb *let* is not in the original. Now the question arises, What is light? To which I answer, it is the most subtle and perfect fluid in nature—it is the universal principle of life, and is used in the scriptures as the symbol of life—as likewise darkness is the emblem of death. Now death implies a cessation of motion, a perfect paralization of matter. And such was the condition the confused chaos was in, when it was enveloped in darkness; which darkness is as really matter as is the crust of the earth; for it is nothing else than the humid densities or particles of the atmosphere gravitating to their centre, through the rays of the solar orb being intercepted by the disk of the earth, or any other phenomenon which the Creator chooseth to use; and it is said concerning the darkness that was over all the land of Egypt, that it was darkness which might be felt. But light, as I have observed, implies life or motion, and there can be neither life or light without motion; therefore,

when the Almighty Creator said, Be light, it was actually the infusing of life into nature—it was nothing less than the spirit taking possession of the waters, preparatory to their conjointly taking possession of the earth, the body, as I shall shew more at large further on. I would now request the reader's attention to the terms night and day, as they are placed, namely, the night first; because, when God by his Spirit commenced operating upon the confused chaos, it was covered with darkness—a true emblem of mankind in their present natural fallen state, for until the Holy Spirit illuminates the mind of man, it is nothing (in a spiritual sense) but a dark chaos; therefore the church of Christ may well say, "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now," &c.

"And God said, let there be light." Now it does not follow that light was not in existence prior to that, as there never was a time when light did not exist; for God himself being the fountain of light and life, it consequently is eternal, as respects its generation. Therefore, when atheists ignorantly ask how there could be day and night without the sun, they only manifest their insane folly, as did the notorious Thomas Paine, when he asked the same question; which question I shall fairly answer in the proper place. But now to the text.

LIGHT DIVIDED FROM DARKNESS.

"And there was light. And God saw the light that it was good, and God divided the light from the darkness. (v. 5.) And God called the light day, and the darkness he called night."

Now the word יוֹם *yoom*, *day*, implies tumultuousness, agitation, &c. ; thus denoting the action of the subtle fluid or spirit light upon the confused chaos, which was covered with water or ice. Therefore it is probable, that the division of the light from the darkness alludes to the fact of the light being called day, and the darkness night—terms significant of their condition, the day denoting the atmosphere in motion, and the night the densities of the atmosphere gravitating to the earth, as I shall have occasion to shew more at large.

Thus was the first day performed, on the principle of life communicated to the natural creation ; or, in other words, it was the quickening of nature—which brings me to the next operation,

THE EXPANSION OF THE WATERS.

Verse 6. “And God said, let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, to divide the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament ; and it was so.” The word רָקֶם translated firmament, signifies to expand, to stretch forth ; it is called in the 150th Psalm the power of God. הַלְלָהוּ בְּרָקֶעַ עֹז praise him in the firmament, his power. The particle *of* in the English translation is not in the original Hebrew.

It is most evident to the commonest observer, that it is by the action of light that the darkness or gross particles of the atmosphere are scattered ; therefore God by his Spirit infused light into the darkness, or waters, (for the atmosphere is no-

hing else than water in a rarified state,) and caused an expansion of the same; consequently the passage might have been correctly rendered, “Let there be an expansion in the midst of the waters;” and in that sense the word *yp̄* is used, Isaiah xlii. 5, and many other places. So that as the perfect fluid light is the agent which God useth to quicken, expand, and give motion to the whole creation, it is justly called the power of God.

Verse 8. “And God called the firmament heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.” Now, the firmament being called heaven, seems to have reference to its being the ruling principle, ordained to regulate the balance of nature; for, as in a spiritual sense, the secret influence of the Holy Spirit in the mind of man, moving him Godward, is called the kingdom of heaven, so, likewise, the natural firmament being the active principle or kingdom of life, which, by its subtle agency, infuseth life into all nature, it, in a natural sense, is called heaven also.

THE GATHERING OF THE WATERS.

“And God said, let the waters under the heaven (the firmament) be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.” The gathering together of the waters into one place, seems to imply their retiring into the centre of the earth, as it says, “The earth was without form and void,” or hollow; as the word *נֹהַ* signifies emptiness, hollowness, having nothing, &c. And in my opinion I am supported by the second verse of the 104th Psalm, where it

saith concerning the wonderful works of God in the creation, that "He stretched out the earth above the waters." So it is perfectly rational and scriptural to conclude, that the waters retired into the centre of the earth. And in the 24th Psalm and second verse it says, "He hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods." Thus was the earth at once constituted the womb of mineral, vegetable, and animal life, by receiving into it the soul, the circulating medium, by which, like animal bodies, it is enabled constantly to expand and supply itself, just the same as animal bodies are expanded and renovated by the blood, as they are constantly wearing away by friction. And thus did the womb of the earth become the great chimical laboratory, in which all the wonderful and mysterious operations of nature are performed.

I am aware that a prevalent opinion exists amongst philosophers, that the centre of the earth is fire; and there are strong reasons to suppose so, seeing that if excavators get to a certain depth in the earth, the heat is so intense that animal life cannot there exist; and, likewise, that the gulf streams flowing under the Panamaan Mountains, from the Atlantic to the Pacific Oceans, being so hot, must, as they suppose, acquire their heat from the central fire of the earth; from which it is by some supposed the eruption of the volcanoes proceed. But if we consider the fact, that the earth's diameter may be computed at 8,292 miles, we may allow a central abyss for the waters of 18,876 miles in circumference, which would leave 1,000 miles for the crust of the earth—a substance quite sufficient for the work of spontaneous combustion to

go on, from the exhalations of the central waters, as they amalgamate with the inflammable combustibles in the earth, and manifest themselves in the form of volcanoes ; which eruptions of the earth, when compared with its bulk, are only in proportion to an inflamed pimple upon the body of a large elephant.

THE QUICKENING OF THE EARTH.

Verse 10. "And God called the dry land earth." The word יְאָרֶת translated earth, implies to crumble to pieces, significant of the nature of the same. Now it is well known, that all the multifarious forms in which mineral, vegetable, and animal life manifest themselves, are so many portions of atoms of earth, which are by the infallible laws of nature, in an infinite variety of ways, constantly passing from one department to another, until they return to the earth again ; and the innumerable, yea, infinite revolutions which those scattered atoms have to encounter before they become consolidated with their parent earth again, is only known to him who created them.

"And the gathering together of the waters called he seas." The word יְמִים translated seas, implies tumultuousness, agitation, circulation, motion or life : and the sea, like the blood in living animals, is always in motion ; it is the soul or life of the earth, as much as blood is the soul or life of animal bodies. Therefore, when the Almighty said, "Let the waters be gathered together into one place," it was actually commanding the soul to take possession of the body ; and thus was the earth quickened, and then commenced the mystery of generation, and by the same process (the

mystery of which I cannot fathom) all generation is accomplished; for, although it is a fact, that the perfect fluid light is the article which infuseth its electric life into all nature, yet the way by which it accomplishes the same is a mystery only known to God, the fountain of light and life.

THE FRUCTIFICATION OF THE EARTH.

Verse 11. "And God said, let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed after his kind, and the fruit-tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed was in itself: and the earth brought forth grass, &c. And God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the third day."

Thus we see that as soon as the earth received the quickened waters, according to the fiat of the Almighty Creator, it brought forth vegetation in abundance: and thus is it the case with all nature, whether animal, vegetable, or mineral; no sooner does the principle of life enter into either of those kingdoms, than they receive the power of fructification, as likewise that of expansion, the principle from which the growth of all matter proceeds. And thus was the earth prepared as a garden well watered, for the reception of the various orders of creatures about to be created. And now commenceth the work of the fourth day.

THE GREAT LIGHTS APPOINTED.

Verse 14. "And God said, let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night, and let them be for signs and for

seasons, and for days, and years. And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven, to give light upon the earth. And it was so."

This passage evidently refers to the sun, moon, and stars—a general inclusion of them all together, without reference to their magnitude, but yet stating the purpose for which they were appointed, namely, for signs and for seasons, and for days, and years—the very purposes for which they have most admirably answered ever since they were created and appointed to their offices; for (חרס) the solar orb, the central focus of light, has served to divide time into minutes, hours, days, and years; whilst the moon has not only served to cheer us in the midnight gloom, but has likewise divided the year into months; and the brave mariner, whilst ploughing through the ocean's briny billows, has by the stars been helped to steer his course. But having spoken of the heavenly lights generally, I now come to particularize them, which brings me to

Verse 16, which reads thus, "And God made two great lights, the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also.* And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day."

Here we have a special account of the two great lights "the greater light to rule the day." It appears that, until the sun

* Probably alluding to the other planets of the solar system, as likewise the stars beyond it.

was made, God did, by the direct operative power of his Spirit, cause the earth to revolve, and so produced the first, second, and third days. But when the elements were by his power perfectly organized, and set in motion, he appointed the sun, the greater light, as the main spring, to perpetuate that motion. Thus was the greater light constituted the instrument to rule the day ; which brings me now to the place in which I may proceed to fulfil my promise in answering the absurd objection of the notorious Thomas Paine to this part of the history of the creation. He asks how there could be day and night without the sun, and ridicules the idea ; but if he, and all fools like him, would but humbly search the word of God, with a view to find the truth, and try their principles by the same—instead of trying to pervert it, because it condemns their wicked and useless lives—they would find it a word of spirit and life to them, which would prove “a lamp to their feet, and a light to their path ;” but “they stumble at the word, being disobedient thereto.” That is the grand secret ; their hearts are wrong, not their heads : and the man who fights against the word of God, and wilfully blasphemers the same, against the light of his conscience—that man sins against the Holy Ghost ; the unpardonable sin which is never forgiven, neither in this world nor the world to come, because, by doing despite to the Spirit, he sins beyond repentance. And it is a fact well known, that Thomas Paine died a most awful death. But, notwithstanding the absurd objections of such men appear most plausible to a superficial observer, yet, to the honest and attentive reader, their objections, when

brought to the touchstone of truth, appear the very excrescence of folly, as I will proceed to shew.

THE MAIN-SPRING OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM, THE SUN.

Having treated of the adaptation of the various elements composing the machine of nature, I now (in answer to Thomas Paine's objection) wish to direct my readers' attention to the main-spring of that machine.

For the elucidation of the subject, I will take for example a watch, which is a complicated piece of machinery, composed of plates, pillars, wheels, springs, &c. ; which piece of mechanism is designed to be kept in motion by a main-spring, after its component parts have been properly adjusted ; which, when accomplished, the artisan, to prove the accuracy of his work, places his thumb against the main wheel, and by that means gives motion to the rest of the works ; and if he could keep his thumb there for the space of one hundred and eighty minutes, he would give the time appointed for three hours. But, having proved the accuracy of his work, he inserts the main-spring into the cylinder, which, by a chain, he attaches to a large conical wheel, and the elasticity of the spring being in proportion to the strength required by the other parts, it is exactly adapted to perpetuate the motion. And thus was the machine of nature set in order ; not that God needed to try his work, like a finite watchmaker, for God's work is perfect from the beginning—He cannot err. But so did he arrange the elements, and perfectly balance all nature, and gave unto it certain laws of motion ; and then ordained

the sun (the greater light) to perpetuate the same. Therefore Thomas Paine's objection comes to nothing: and it is just as absurd as it would be for a man to say, that a cart which was made for a certain horse to draw, could not be used to convey anything to a distance without the horse to draw it; for if the watchmaker, by his finite skill, could arrange his little complex machine, and prove its accuracy—by the aid of his thumb, give it motion, and then supply a main spring to perpetuate it, surely the all-wise Creator could, by the power of his Spirit, arrange the elements, give them their laws of motion, and then ordain the sun to perpetuate the same. But, from infidel objections I will return to my text again.

The greater light, it states, was to rule the day—it was to “divide the light from the darkness,” for “the light he called day, and the darkness he called night.” I have before observed, that darkness is nothing else than the densities of the atmosphere progressing to a state of stagnancy: therefore it says that the greater light was to rule the day. The word **meshel**, translated rule, implies a principle of power, action—a very apt figure to express the day-spring, which the solar orb actually is; and the word *youm* (day) signifies tumultuousness, the exact condition in which our atmosphere is actually in, when the solar orb is shining with meridian splendour into any portion of it: for by the impulse of the solar rays, or light, the atmosphere round the earth is kept in constant commotion, because the **חַרְס**, the solar orb, by diffusing its heat into the atmosphere, causeth that portion upon which it is operating to be so rarified, that

a conflict immediately occurs, as a natural consequence, between the part rarified and that which falls into the disk or shadow of our earth, or any other planet. And thus it appears, that while the rays of the sun are acting upon one hemisphere, the darkness or densities of the less rarified parts are falling upon the other, or opposite one; so that the solar orb, by the power of its rays of light, or centrifugal force, is constantly driving the other planets from it, their proper centre; whilst the less rarified darkness or densities of the atmosphere, or centripetal force, are as constantly pressing them to it: and by that means each planet is made to revolve upon its own axis; and so it follows, as a natural consequence, that the planets, revolving upon their own axes, must of necessity travel or perform certain orbits. The particular dimensions of each must consequently be in proportion to their magnitude, diameter, or circumference; and thus the variations of the magnitude of the orbits of the several planets may be accounted for: and most beautifully is the action of the solar orb described in the first chapter of *Ecclesiasticus*, fourth verse; but before I enter upon the text, I must offer a few remarks upon the three different terms which in the Hebrew are applied to the solar orb, all three of which have, by most of our translators, been used to express the same thing, whereas in the Hebrew they have different significations: the first is שֶׁמֶשׁ *shemesh*, signifying the light of the solar orb or its rays in action; the second is חָמָה, *chaw-mah*,* denoting the heat or flame of the same; the third is חֶרֶשׁ *cheres*,† the name of the solar orb

* See Cant. vi. 10. Isa. xxx. 26. † Judges viii. 13.

itself, signifying a burning ulcer. I have before observed that the sun is the main-spring of our solar system—the central focus of light, with which it is supplied without measure; and by its diffusing the same into the immensity of space, causeth the revolution of the spheres, within the range of its power; therefore, being the central focus of light, or electrical fire, it is in the Hebrew very aptly symbolized by a burning ulcer; concerning which I have much to say.

Modern philosophers have raised an objection to the philosophical portions of the scriptures, on account of their being at variance with the evidence of natural facts, as they suppose. They allege that the bible represents the solar orb as rising and setting; and the inference they draw from that is, that the sun is represented as going round the earth: whereas plain natural facts prove that the sun is the centre of the solar system, and that the planets travel round it—and so the scriptures state, and that I will in a few words prove, from the text I have just hinted at, Eccles. i. 5. I will give the original text further on, with the literal translation, because the common translation is not quite correct—therefore my learned readers may judge for themselves; it reads in the original thus:—

“ And the solar rays spring forth, and the solar rays (draw off or) go in again; and to his place draweth in and spreadeth his renown; he goeth to the south, and round about to the north, whirling about and moving the wind continually, and upon his circuit turning it back again.”

Infidels and atheists ridicule the scriptural account of the creation; but Solomon, who was

skilled in all kinds of wisdom, considered it the very perfection of philosophy; and I can, without fear of contradiction, assert that the philosophy of the bible is in perfect harmony with every real philosophical truism which modern philosophers lay claim to as the spontaneous productions of their own researches; and every fact in the Newtonian system is in perfect unison therewith; and the text just quoted (out of many) is a standing proof of the same, the details of which I will now proceed to open; and, to make it as explicit as possible, shall take it sentence by sentence, separately. (בְּרֵחֶת הַשְׁמֶשׁ וּבְאֶלְמָנָה) “and the solar rays spring forth, and the solar rays draw off or go in again.” Thus is the morning and evening described, or the sun’s rising and setting, according to the vulgar notions; but the sense of the text sheweth the springing forth of the solar light from the (cheres) solar orb, or centre, upon any portion of the earth, in the morning, and their drawing off or retiring from the same in the twilight of the evening, as I have before remarked concerning the earth revolving upon its own axis. וְאֶל מָקוֹם שָׁוֹאֵף זָוָה הוּא שֵׁם “and to his place draweth in and spreadeth his renown.” Now the last word in this quotation (שֵׁם) is used in Gen. vi. 4, Num. xvi. 2, and other places, to express renown; and as the word שֵׁם *shemesh* is used all through the scriptures to express the action of the rays of light spreading forth from the (cheres) solar orb, or the goings forth of the sun, so the pronoun הוּא *hu* stands in the text, to shew that all the attributes there set forth belong to him as the principal; for, although the nominative *cheres*, which governs the whole sentence, is

not in the text, yet must it be understood by the masculine pronoun (*hu*) third person singular, as belonging to (*cheres*) the solar orb; therefore (*shemesh*) is the agent by which he performs his office; and who, having a mighty work to accomplish, and no hands to do it, yet does perform the same by breathing forth of his vital principle to the uttermost bounds of his habitation, or system, of which he is the centre. Therefore it may be truly said, that before his place he spreadeth his renown; because his appointed station is the centre, and his field of action the extremity of the system of which he is the centrifugal power of motion, in which his influence is sensibly felt, and may be justly called the life-spring of the same, because by his influence all nature is quickened, to perform the work of procreation.

הוֹלֵךְ אֶל-דָּרוֹם וּסְבַבְ אֶל-צְפֹן “he goeth to the north, and round about to the south.” I think this section of the text is sufficient to prove, beyond all doubt, that the term *shemesh* cannot refer to the solar orb itself, because, according to the vulgar notion of the sun’s rising and setting, it is always understood as rising in the east, and setting in the west; consequently it must have reference to his spreading forth his rays in every direction—סְבַבְ הַוְלֵךְ הַרוּחַ “whirling about the wind continually, *shab haroh*, and upon its circuit turning it back again.” How strikingly does the above text set forth the glorious and handy work of God, in appointing the solar orb to keep the vast machine of nature in life and motion, by causing each planet of his system to revolve upon its axis, and travel its appointed and proper orbit. But the last

section of the text I think most beautifully and strikingly describes the cause of the wind—"whirling about the wind continually, and upon its circuit turning it back again;" so that whilst the sun by its heat is constantly scattering the densities of the atmosphere, and causing a decomposition of matter by his centrifugal force, the less rarified portion of the atmosphere, by its centripetal force, is performing as a body its office of pressing the planets to their centre, as well as consolidating the dust of the earth into hardness. Thus is all nature governed by the principles of expansion and compression; for matter of itself possesses no innate power of cohesion, which our philosophers ascribe to it. The doctrine has no place in the bible—it exists only in their own imaginations; for no two particles of matter can adhere together, unless they are acted upon by some external power; and the strong magnetic power which the loadstone possesses, is in consequence of the peculiar texture of that metal possessing the property of retaining more fully the electric fluid of the atmosphere; and the same magnetic power, by the principle of galvanism, can be communicated to the softest iron. And most beautifully is the principle of the cohesion of matter described in the Book of Job, xxxviii. 37, 38, "Who can number the clouds in wisdom, or who can stay (or quiet) the bottles of heaven, when the dust groweth into hardness, and the clods cleave fast together?"

Thus we see that the inspired writers had no difficulty in deciding what the principle of cohesion was. O no. "The fear of the Lord, *that is wisdom*, and to depart from evil, that

is understanding." Job, xxviii. 28. How often would the word of God settle in one minute, what some of our literary gentlemen frequently perplex themselves years about, without coming to any certain decision at last. And perhaps no question has been more loosely defined, than that of the doctrine of cohesion; whereas the word of God declares, that the falling of the dense vapours of the atmosphere are the cause of the dust becoming embodied with the solid earth, and the clods cleaving fast together. So much concerning the doctrine of cohesion.

But I must offer a few more remarks upon the sun causing the wind to blow, as described in the last section of the text, namely, "whirling about the wind continually, and upon its circuit turning it back again." Thus we may understand, that by the refraction of his rays, the densities of the atmosphere are scattered and driven before it, "whirled about continually, until they return to their position again." Thus is the cause of the wind most simply stated: matter and spirit opposed to each other—an incessant conflict, varying in station according to the position to the several planets in their orbits. And so perfectly has God balanced every portion of our planetary system, that, as an immense and perfect machine, with every portion of it wisely adjusted, it revolves in the most perfect harmony around the sun, its centre; but how so truly balanced, is a secret only known to Him who balanced it, and who can at his will reverse those laws, as I intend shewing when I come to the miracle of the sun and moon standing still at the command of Joshua, &c., but now will proceed with my original text again.

Having attempted to shew how the sun rules the day, I now must offer a few remarks upon the moon, which it says was “to rule the night.” And upon this portion of the text, I have but little light; because the word of God, while it describes at large the offices of the sun, only makes one general declaration, that the lesser light (the moon) was to rule the night; therefore what I am about to say is chiefly conjecture; but the fact of the moon ruling the night, or the darkness, by its reflective light, is beyond conjecture; but what influence the reflective power of the moon, or other planets, may have upon the densities of the atmosphere, or the fluid which fills the immensity of space, I cannot pretend to say; but it is not unreasonable to suppose that the weight of the lunar orb, conjoined with its velocity, &c. may be absolutely requisite to regulate the motion of the earth, as without it, the earth might acquire too great a velocity: and this may probably be the case with all the other planets of the solar system; so that the moon, in that sense, may rule the night, as well as by its borrowed light. Thus much concerning the appointment of the moon, which brings me now to the fifth day.

THE FRUCTIFICATION OF THE WATERS.

Verse 20. “And God said, let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life.” Thus we see that the water being the first thing that was quickened, it was the first element to produce animal life. “And fowl that may fly above the earth, in the open firmament of heaven. *And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought*

forth abundantly, after their kind: and every winged fowl after his kind. And God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas: and let fowl multiply in the earth. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

There is some very peculiar information in this last quotation; for in it we are informed, that not only were the fish and other aquatic animals produced from the waters, but likewise the fowls of the air. And it is well worthy of our observation and admiration, that God has so wisely and exactly adapted every living creature to the peculiar element in which it is destined to range, as likewise the kind of life he has predestinated it to live; as, for instance, the fishes adapted to swim in the water, are provided with fins to propel them along, air bladders, to rise or sink at pleasure in the liquid element, and gills, &c. to respire in the same; also, amphibious animals, so peculiarly constructed as to live in water or on land, but could not live long if confined exclusively to one of those regions. And it being requisite that the constituent parts of the inhabitants of the waters should be of a lighter specific gravity than those about to be brought forth by the earth, they were consequently produced or brought forth from the waters; as likewise the fowls of the air—for the air or atmosphere being the same element in kind as the waters, only more rarified and pure, it was requisite that the fowls to fly therein should be produced from the same element; consequently they are of a lighter specific gravity than those exclusively adapted to the land, and possessing in

the component parts of their bodies more of the fluid element than of the earth, and whose bones are of a finer texture, more slender and hollow in their formation, that their buoyancy might not be impeded as they soar along the ethereal regions. But those creatures which the earth was about to bring forth were to be of a more solid texture, "of the earth, earthy." O how wisely has the Creator, I repeat again, adapted every living creature to the kind of life he has predestinated it to live in, and that to a nicety infinitely surpassing all human skill and science—the whole scheme of creation so perfect and compact, that nothing less than the infinite God could have contrived it.

Yet atheists are such fools as to assert that all things came by chance. Then, if they came by chance, how do they account for the fact of the universal laws of nature being governed by the same harmony now as they always have been? How is it, I ask them, that "grapes grow not upon thorns, nor figs upon thistles"—that apple-trees produce not potatoes—that elephants bring not forth apes, nor cows, swine? If nature had been produced by chance, such things must have occurred. But we see it is not so; every thing in nature observes the same laws now which they did thousands of years ago; every species of herbs, trees, and animals, still remain in their various classes; and, although by the skill of man they can be improved in their condition, yet no new species can be produced: for it is a well-known fact that no mule animal, partaking of the nature of two species, possessest the power of procreation; for horses still remain horses, and asses still

remain asses, and atheists still remain fools. But to the text again, concerning the sixth day.

THE CREATION OF TERRESTRIAL ANIMALS.

“ And God said, let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind ; cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth, after his kind : and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind. And God saw that it was good.”

Thus, by the fiat of the Creator did the earth bring forth the living creatures, of a greater specific gravity than those produced from the waters, created exclusively to locate upon the earth, only endowed with animal life and instinct, passions which nature alone can satisfy ; for, give the brute creation plenty to eat and drink, liberty to range wherever their instinct leads them, and opportunity to repose or rise up at pleasure, and that is the climax of their felicity. And sorry am I that I am forced to see multitudes of the human race such slaves to their sensual passions, that they appear to have so destroyed the image of God in them, by the gratification of their beastial or animal propensities, that they are only fit to be classed with the brute creation ; nay, worse, they are below them, for many may be classed with demons.

THE THREE PRINCIPLES OF ANIMAL LIFE.

There is something very peculiar in the sentence, “ Let the earth bring forth the living creature that hath life :” that is, as I conjecture, merely animal life ; belonging to which there are three universal principles, which are generally

so likewise, no doubt, as to the form of his person, because, when Christ, the wisdom and power of God, appeared, according to the purpose and foreknowledge of God, he came in the likeness of man, even the likeness of sinful flesh; but when he was transfigured upon the mount, there the glory of his Godhead shone forth through the veil of his flesh—shewing to his disciples what the beauty of man was in his perfect state, before he had fallen, So that man was created in the likeness of Him who was, according to the foreknowledge of God, to restore our nature again unto that perfect state from which it has so woefully fallen. Therefore he came in the likeness of sinful flesh, but only in the likeness; for, had he appeared in the likeness of man before he had fallen, then the purpose for which he came could not have been accomplished. Consequently he came into our death, and “tasted death for every man,” that he might redeem and rescue us from the power of death.

And which glorious person, under the title of wisdom, by the mouth of Solomon, (Prov. viii. from the 22nd verse,) saith, “The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before the works of old. I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was. When there were no depths, I was brought forth; when there were no fountains of water. Before the mountains were settled; before the hills was I brought forth: while as yet he had not made the earth nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the earth. When he prepared the heavens, I was there: when he set a compass upon the face of the deep: when he established the clouds above:

when he strengthened the fountains of the deep : when he gave to the sea his decree, that the waters should not pass his commandment : when he appointed the foundations of the earth : then I was by him, as one brought up with him ; and I was his delight, rejoicing always before him ; rejoicing in the habitable parts of the earth ; and my delights were with the sons of men.” And in the beginning of St. John’s Gospel, the same glorious person is written of thus : “ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God :” or, according to the original, *καὶ Θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος* and God was the Word. “ The same (that is the Word) was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him ; and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life ; and the life was the light of men.” And of him all the law and the prophets testify. He was the Angel of the Covenant.

In Gen. xlviii. 16, Jacob calls the same person “ the Angel that redeemed him.” And the Prophet Isaiah, lxiii., after describing the loving-kindness of the Lord to Israel, in the ninth verse, exclaims, concerning the same personage, “ The Angel of his presence saved them. In his love and in his pity he redeemed them. And he bare them, and carried them all the days of old.” And in Malachi, iii. 1, he is called “ the Messenger of the Covenant,” in whom dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And, because the Israelites were exceedingly afraid at hearing the voice of God from the cloud, Exod. xx. 19, God promised them, (alluding to the same person,) that *he would raise up unto them a great Pro-*

phet, &c. Deut. xviii. 15. And Philip said unto Nathaniel, (speaking of the same person,) "We have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write," &c. John i. 45.

Thus, it is not very difficult for those who believe the word of God, to decide who it refers to when it says, "So God created man in his own image." And, however Jewish rabbies may try to misconstrue the text, yet still the whole body of prophecy stands in array against them.

And the Psalmist David saith of him (Ps. ii. 7) by the spirit of prophecy, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." And again, in the eleventh and twelfth verses, of the same person, "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." And in Isaiah, ix. 6, the prophet speaking of him exclaims, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." And it is not unreasonable to suppose that allusion is made to him in Gen. iii. 22, where it saith, "Behold the man is become as one of us."

Therefore when it saith, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," and then in the next verse declares that it was the likeness of God that man was created in, it is most inconsistent to say that God spake to his angels, seeing that it was not in the likeness of angels, but of God, that man was made.

Thus much concerning that portion of the text; which brings me now to

Verse 27. "So God created man in his own image: in the image of God created he him"—speaking of mankind in the singular number. "Male and female created he them"—speaking of mankind in the common gender.

Verse 28. "And God blessed them; and God said unto them, be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it," &c. And from the 29th verse to the end, it states, that all herbs bearing seed, and every tree bearing fruit, was given to man for food; and to the beasts, and every creeping thing upon the earth, every herb. "And God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day."

Thus endeth the general account of the six days of the creation; after which, in the next chapter, there follows a summing up of the whole, and then the first sabbath is noticed, with, likewise, some particular details of facts connected with the foregoing six days' work—to which I now invite the reader's attention.

Chap. 2nd. "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." All complete, all predestinated to be governed by certain laws, from which nothing can be detracted or added to, without producing an unnatural derangement of the same.

Verse 2. "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made." "And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created to make :" for so it reads in the Hebrew.

“created to make.” Thus we have the account of the first sabbath, or the sealing up of the six days’ work.

There is a mystery contained in the original text, created (ברשָׁלָמָל) to make, which is completely lost sight of in our English translation: for in the English it reads, “created and made,” which makes nonsense of the text; for the words created and made have a like signification, so that created and made actually means created and created, and the last word is a repetition of the same act which the first implies; whereas created to make, opens up the purpose for which all things were created, namely, to procreate again, to be fruitful, to multiply, and replenish the earth. Consequently the all-wise Creator ordained the great machine of nature to replenish itself; therefore when it says that God rested from his labour, it implies he left off creating, because his work was then perfect and complete, with the power of procreation. Therefore it saith, “He rested from all his work which he created to make:” that is, all things being created with the power of propagating their kind, all future existence must be the natural production of ordinary generation: therefore “God rested on the seventh day, from all his work which he created to make,” and rejoiced in all his wise and handy work: and so instituted a day of rest, wherein mankind may rest from their six days’ toil, and meditate upon the kind providence of God to them in the past week—go to his sanctuary, and, with wonder, love, and praise, adore him for his *unspeakable* love in providing salvation for man, *who by transgression has fallen most woefully*

from that state in which he was originally created; but to which he may be restored again by Christ, the Sun of Righteousness; who, like the natural sun, hath arisen with healing in his wings. For, as the natural sun is the instrument which the Creator ordained to perpetuate the life of all the natural creation, so is Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, the medium by which all things shall be restored again. "And when all things are subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." 1 Corin. xv. 28. And, however mysterious the ways and decrees of God may appear to us, yet will he make all things to work for his own glory, and the eternal salvation of mankind; and that he hath fully declared in his will, which he has made known to man; but his secret decrees he reserveth to himself. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but those things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our children for ever." Deut. xxix. 29.

But I must not digress from the text any further, and so will return to where I left off, namely, 2nd ch. 3rd v., from which further details of the order of the creation are recorded.

Verse 4. "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, and every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no man to till the ground. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the

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took them wives of all which they chose." Thus by giving their hearts to lust after those who despised the ways and service of God, they, like thousands in the present day, sold themselves to commit sin, and so fixed logs to their own souls which eventually sank them down into a state of moral guilt, in which they were too vile to live: consequently the Almighty determined to sweep the cursed race from off the earth.

THE DELUGE THREATENED.

Verse 3. "And the Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh." There appears in this last quotation a little defection in the translation; in fact, the sentence, "for that he also is flesh," seems nonsense, when I refer to the original; and when I take it in connection with the context, I feel confirmed in my opinion, for the word בָּשָׂר bashagam (translated, for that) is compound, composed of בָּשָׂר to loiter, delay, &c. and בָּשָׂר to abound, be copious, &c.; shewing, that, although mankind had lingered upon the earth by long generations, and by that means had multiplied to excess, and abounded to almost overflowing measure, in consequence of the protracted length of human life—that, although that had hitherto been the case, yet his Spirit should not always so strive with, or in (בְּאַדְם) man, though he hath multiplied so greatly upon the earth. Yet my Spirit shall not always so strive with man—his life shall not be so prolonged for the future; yet his days shall not be utterly cut off, but his age shall be diminished upon the earth, to an hundred and twenty years. And this, to me, appears a true paraphrase upon the

ground." But now follow some further details connected with the creation of man.

MAN RELATED TO EARTH AND HEAVEN.

Verse 7. "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." The word **חַיִם** *chajim*, translated life, is plural, lives. "And God breathed into his nostrils the breath of lives, and man became a living soul." Which appears to me to imply, that man was not only endowed with animal life, but with divine life, which the Almighty breathed into him; an emanation of the Deity, a spirit which can only be satisfied with the living God. Therefore man is related both to earth and heaven; he is not only possessed of animal life, but life of a higher order, an emanation from God, a noble faculty which constitutes him superior to the brute creation, by which he was capacitated to be lord of the earth: animal life to replenish the earth, and spiritual or divine life, to subdue it; that is, by the divine or spiritual life which God gave him, he was to use and rule all things which his Maker had put under his dominion, for the glory of God and his own happiness.

Thus, man being created according to the determinate council of **יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים** *Jehovah, Elohim*, the triune Godhead, who "breathed into his nostrils the breath of lives," he was thereby constituted a living soul—that is, a soul united to his Maker, and capable of holding communion with him; a soul manifesting the glory of his Maker; a soul full of love and perfect peace; a soul to live *for ever*; a soul possessing intelligence and fore-

sight, and capable of being filled with God—so capacious, that, were it able to grasp the vastness of the universe, and claim it as its own domain, it would then snatch at a shadow, and feel within itself an empty void, which God alone can fill: for it came from God, and with him alone can it be satisfied. And Solomon asks, “Who knoweth the spirit of the sons of Adam, which is continually ascending,” (for so the Hebrew reads,) that is, constantly in the pursuit of high and mighty things, continually craving after something which the earth and all its fulness cannot supply—a noble faculty, so mysterious and subtle in its workings, that man becomes bewildered and lost in astonishment, when he contemplates his own existence. For he cannot, with all his cunning sophistry, bring himself to believe that after this life is ended, he then becomes extinct. O no; there is that witness within every man, which assures him that his spirit, the inner man, is something more than animal existence—a spirit which goeth upwards: for “the spirit of the beast goeth downwards;” for the English text reads thus—“Who knoweth the spirit of a man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?” Eccles. iii. 21.

And the same inspired writer declares, Prov. xx. 27, “That the spirit of a man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of his belly”—that is, all the secret thoughts and desires of man.

THE CONSCIENCE OF MAN.

The Hebrew word **בָּבֶן** translated belly, as a noun, signifies the central and internal part of any body, and is used in 1 Kings vii. 20, to denote the hollow

of the pillars in Solomon's porch ; but in the text in Ecclesiasticus I believe it has reference to the desires and propensities of the heart, or the seat of human affection, wherever it may be ; but thus much we do know, that as the brain is the region in which we sensibly feel the power of reason and understanding, so is the region of the heart the focus in which we as really and sensibly feel every passion to kindle, whether good or bad ; and that is the region which the נֶשֶׁמֶת אֱלֹהִים spirit of man, the נֵר יְהוָה candle of Jehovah, explores ; as, according to Parkhurst, the radical meaning of the word נֶר implies to split, separate, or divide ; or representing the action of light or fire splitting or dividing the masses of gross air.

And thus does the voice of conscience search out and divide every thought of the heart ; and every one who has felt the voice of conscience speaking like a clap of thunder, knows well how sensibly its throbs are felt in the region of the heart, when the pulsation of which is so suddenly, rapidly, and alarmingly increased, that respiration is with difficulty performed.

Thus does man possess a noble faculty which the brute beast has not—a faculty which man himself cannot comprehend, although he is well assured of its existence : because, superior to the brute creation, he can, through by-gone ages, trace back the thoughts and exploits of his fore-fathers, weigh their actions, and the motives by which they were actuated, in the balances of truth and justice, and, according to their fruits, applaud or execrate their memory : or, can record for future generations yet unborn, his own *ideas on religion, morality, philosophy, learning,*

or national polity ; and, however wide their principles or hypothetical schemes may deviate from the simple truth, yet conscience, the candle of the Lord, always speaks truth—for it is truth, and abstract truth, which judges not according to appearance, but righteous judgment. Consequently conscience often condemns what custom doth allow ; and what one man's conscience will not permit him to do, his neighbour might do with impunity, because the same motions of the mind doth not affect all men alike. And that which a man's own conscience condemns must not be indulged in, though the whole church allow it, and more especially so, what the word of God in the plainest language condemns.

And this, and much more, belongs to the spirit of a man, which goeth upward. He being the image and likeness of his Maker, and possessed of a reasonable soul, was so constituted an accountable creature—a free agent, with an unbiassed will—free to stand and free to fall : whilst his felicity depended upon his obedience to a certain law which God gave him, as a test of his fidelity, the account of which is given in the following verses :—

Verse 8. “ And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that was pleasant to the sight, and good for food : the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.”—Concerning which trees I intend offering a few remarks further on, but at present go on with the history. Verse 10. “ And a river went out of Eden to wa-

as likewise a portion of all kinds of clean beasts, which were to be taken in by sevens, "the male and his female," that is seven of both sexes; and of those which were unclean by twos, the male and female; of the fowls of the air also by sevens, the male and the female, to keep seed alive upon the face of the earth: and Noah was to provide food of every kind for their sustenance. And the chapter concludes, "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he."

It is no uncommon occurrence, to hear infidel scepticks ridicule the idea of such a number of living animals being confined within the ark; but when its dimensions are duly considered, their insinuation of the impossibility of the thing vanishes. The ark, it states, was made after the following dimensions: its length three hundred cubits, its width fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits. Now, a cubit was taken from the length of an ordinary sized man's arm, measuring from the tip of the elbow to the end of his middle finger, twenty-one inches: consequently the ark, according to our measure, would contain three stories, (according to the fashion Noah was commanded to make it,) each measuring 175 yards in length, 30 yards in width, and about 17 yards high; therefore there was ample room for the respiration of all its inmates.

THE DELUGE.

Chap. vii. In this chapter the Lord commanded Noah, and all his house, to come into the ark, with all the clean and unclean creatures, as described in the preceding chapter; and then, in the fourth verse, the Almighty exclaims, "For yet never

gages his affections towards him, and then makes him willing to serve him with body, soul, and spirit: and, as the natural sun keeps up the life of nature, so doth Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, by the Holy Spirit which he hath received without measure, keep alive the kingdom of grace in his heart, until at last he "presents him faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." Jude, 24 v.

Thus was the fallen state of man typified: but, blessed be God, he set up in the garden of Eden the tree of life—a glorious and lively type of the blessed covenant of grace, by which fallen man should be restored to another and more glorious paradise than that which he lost by transgression.

I have just remarked, that the tree of life in the midst of Eden was a type of the everlasting covenant of grace, which I now proceed to shew: and, first, it was an emblem of Christ, who indeed, is the tree of life. But, in order to obtain some light upon the subject, I must draw my readers' attention to the 22nd chapter of Revelations, from the first verse, "And he shewed me a pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God, and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." And, again, in Ezek. xlvi. where the prophet, by the Spirit of God, (when speaking upon the same subject,) says, "And the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine."

Thus is most clearly shewn the end and use for which the tree of life was designed. It set forth Christ, he being the very sum and substance of the covenant of mercy: therefore he is the root, the stock, and his members the branches.

Secondly. The fruit thereof, which were twelve manner, were for meat; which may be, love, joy, peace, holiness, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, hope, patience. But of this the christian is well assured, that these are the fruits upon which the sincere followers of Christ do constantly feed, and likewise produce, if they are walking in him. But its "leaves were for the healing of the nations." This appears to me typical of the word of God, whose leaves indeed are medicine: for, let a poor sinner's case be as desperate as it may, yet may he find some of those to suit his malady; and Christ being the tree of life, the sum and substance, the beginning and the end of that book, and all the leaves thereof testifying of him—shewing the mind and purpose of God respecting man's salvation through him, as likewise his righteous dealing with all the diversified characters of men, both individually and nationally. In such a light may the pages of holy writ be viewed as the leaves which were for medicine. And the author can say on his own behalf, that when under great trouble and distraction of mind, he has found them suitable medicine indeed—as well as myriads more besides him, in all ages. But now I must say a little about the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

While man refrained from tasting of its fruit, *he only knew good, and the abstaining from its fruit, was the only test of his obedience.* I do not

suppose that there was any inherent property in the fruit of that tree, to communicate knowledge to him, any more than that of any other tree ; but it was partaking or not partaking thereof, upon which the opening of his eyes depended—and a woeful scene did he open his eyes to, when he gratified his lust of pride at the cost of his happiness, as we shall see in his future history, which, after this necessary digression, I again resume.

THE PURPOSE FOR WHICH MAN WAS CREATED.

Verse 15. " And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the midst of the garden, to dress it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat ; but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it : for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die. And the Lord God said, it is not good that the man should be alone ; I will make him an help meet for him. And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air, and brought them unto Adam, to see what he would call them : and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names" to every living creature, &c. Another instance in which he resembled his Maker—his first act of sovereignty—his taking possession of his regal office, by naming the inferior order of animals : " And whatsoever he called every living creature, that was the name thereof." It is remarkable, that every Hebrew name attached to the various living creatures, are significant of their nature, as, for

instance, the name of the hare, signifies to crop the fruit of the ground, and נִשְׁר the name of the eagle, to tear in pieces; and I think there is no room to doubt but the Creator directed the judgment of the man to give names to every living creature, descriptive of their nature.

Whether Hebrew was the language with which Adam was inspired, I cannot pretend with a certainty to determine; but I am inclined to conclude that it was: for, notwithstanding that the universal language was confounded and split into a variety of tongues at the building of Babel, yet there can be no reasonable doubt, but one branch of Noah's family retained the original; and as the word of God is very precise in recording the pedigree of those worthies who scrupulously adhered to the true worship of him, and has caused their genealogical line from Adam, the first man, down to the birth of Christ, to be recorded, it is more than probable, yea, perfectly rational to conclude, that the oracles of truth would be handed down to posterity in that original language with which God inspired the first man.

Verse 20. "And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowls of the air, and to every beast of the field: but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him"—that is a partner to help him.

THE CREATION OF WOMAN.

"And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh thereof. *And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her*

unto the man”—or, according to the original, **רַبָּן יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת-הַצְלָע אֲשֶׁר-לְקַח מִן-הָאָדָם** “And built Jehovah Elohim the very rib which he took from Adam **לְאָשָׂה וַיִּבְאֶה אֶל-הָאָדָם** and brought her to Adam”—shewing that the man was not complete without her. “And Adam said, this is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh ; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.”

Thus we see that the woman was made in the likeness of man, and man in the likeness of God. Therefore a man who debaseth himself, dishonours his Maker ; and a man who dishonours his wife dishonours himself, and a woman who dishonours herself dishonours her husband, who is the likeness of his Maker : and the unity and love of man and wife, as ordained in the holy ordinance of marriage, is a lively type of the unity and love of Christ and his church ; for, as the side of Adam was opened, and woman taken therefrom, whom Adam considered as part of himself, even so was the side of Christ pierced, and through that wound did he pour out his soul for the redemption of his church, of which he is the head, and which he has declared is one with himself, and, that “he that toucheth his church, toucheth the apple of his eye.” But to the text.

“And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.” They had not sinned—and where no sin is, there can be no shame. Then let such persons as are proud of

their splendid apparel, know that that which they pride themselves in, is nothing else than the badge of their depravity ; seeing man needed it not, until he lost the likeness of his Maker, when instantly followed shame, confusion, care, perpetual misery, and death, as the next chapter states.

MAN'S TEMPTATION AND FALL.

Chapter 3rd. " Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden ? " This passage seems to imply a previous conversation between the woman and the serpent, to which the woman answered, " We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden, but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die : for God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." And the sixth verse states, that the woman took of the fruit and did eat, and gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

Verse 7. " And the eyes of them both were opened ; " " and they sewed fig-leaves together, and made themselves aprons." And so is it the case with men now ; when their guilt is discovered, they try to cover it with some lying subterfuge from the eye of public justice. But the word of God says, " Be ye sure your sins will find you out" —and so it proved with our first parents. Verse 8. " And they heard the voice of

the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day : and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden."

I am well aware that the above account of the entrance of sin into the world by the agency of the serpent, has been ridiculed by infidel scepticks—they laugh at the idea of the serpent speaking ; but if parrots, jackdaws, &c. can be made subservient to the cunning of man, to speak his language, why should it be thought impossible for Satan to make use of the serpent for the same purpose ? But let them raise any quibble they will against the above account of the origin of evil, or of Satanic influence, yet the existence of evil they cannot deny, because it meets them at every step they take. But they attempt to shew that it has originated from a false system of education : do away, they say, with that—instil into people's minds right principles—make them to well understand their relationship to each other, and the necessity of mutual co-operation—and social harmony will be sure to follow. But I wish them to show me, if they can, when the false system of education commenced ; I want to know the precise time, because in every history that I have read, I have perceived that evil always existed : and if it sprang out of a false system of education, I ask them, Who educated the first man ? and then I will ask, if they are certain that their notion of the matter is right, how comes it to pass that themselves are so imperfect—how is it that they who profess to have so much philosophical light do, for the major part, prove such curses to society ? It is because sin is born with them.

But the sceptick will ask, Is it reasonable to suppose that the Almighty would pass such a heavy sentence on man, for merely eating of a little fruit? To which I answer, man being created a free agent, it was requisite that a law should be given to him, as a test of his allegiance to his Creator; and it matters not how simple that law was under which our first parents were placed, for the simpler it was, the easier complied with; and it was a law just suitable to their condition; and however trivial their act of disobedience may appear, it was a most daring act of presumption, and wicked rebellion, which opened the way for every other sin to enter; for, until that wilful and wicked act, they only knew good, and dwelt in delightful harmony with their Maker, endowed with every glorious faculty requisite to constitute them like him, and had all things under their dominion; but as soon as they presumed to break the royal law of their Maker, immediately was their perfect happiness destroyed, the knowledge of evil entered, and with that, sorrow, murder, blasphemy, and all the train of hellish passions which have in all ages blackened the history of mankind—the whole catalogue of which may be summed up in the one word, death: for, as the word life implies union to God, “whom to know is eternal life.” so the word death implies separation from God, a scene of dismal woe, blackness, and despair—a bottomless pit in which, if God prevent not, a man keeps sinking deeper and deeper into a state of depravity (consequently further from God) until he becomes perfectly *imbued* with the nature of demons: whereas life *implies* a going on from righteousness to holiness—

a continual ascending, until we rise perfectly into the nature of God, which, according to the 4th chap. 1st Epis. John 15 v., is love—"God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." Therefore, when our first parents, through listening to the voice of the tempter, partook of the forbidden fruit, they, by that act, fell from God their centre, and they, who just before were all true love and perfection—"were naked and were not ashamed"—then became such hideous monsters to each other, that shame and confusion overwhelmed them, and forced them to make fig-leaf aprons to cover their nakedness.* Thus were they incapacitated to enjoy communion with their Maker.

A sense of sin is sure to fill the mind with terror and drive the soul from God, and until he reveals his pardoning love to the soul again, it cannot hold joyful communion with him—"There is no peace saith my God to the wicked :" and so they found it, and tried to hide themselves behind the trees of the garden. But he called out, (v. 9,) "Adam, where art thou?" Alas, poor Adam! he had fallen into a state of reprobation, and sneakingly came forth from his fancied hiding place, and said, "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." But, blessed be God, he had still a purpose of mercy towards Adam and his guilty partner, and called them forth to tell them of a better hiding-place, even salvation through the

* It has been generally conjectured that the forbidden fruit was apples, but, as they sewed fig-leaves together for aprons, why may it not be as reasonably supposed that it was figs.

promised seed. But they anticipated nothing but execution ; therefore they hid themselves because they were naked. "Who told thee that thou wert naked ?" their Maker asked—"hast thou eaten of the tree whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat ? And the man said, the woman which thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the Lord God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done ? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat."

Thus sin caused Adam to criminate his wife, between whom and himself nothing but pure love had hitherto existed—"The man said, the woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." Here was dissimulation. O, how does sin destroy natural affection ? Adam, to screen himself, dissimulatingly tried to cast all the blame upon his wife ; for, in the sixth verse, it reads thus—"She took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also to her husband with her, and he did eat." Thus it appears that he was with her, or stood by, when she plucked the fruit—therefore was equally guilty with her, who, to palliate her crime, laid it to the serpent, upon whom the curse was first pronounced.

THE CURSE PRONOUNCED.

Verse 14. "And the Lord God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field : upon thy belly thou shalt go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life."

By what means the serpent travelled before the

curse I cannot pretend to say, nor upon what it subsisted; but it is well known now that the serpent goes upon his belly, therefore grovels in the dust; consequently dust is part of his portion; and the text does not say that it was to be his sole subsistence, but, "dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life. And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

In the curse upon the serpent is evidently set forth the conflict betwixt the seed of Satan (symbolized by the serpent) and the holy seed of promise, Christ, which should in the fulness of time be born of a woman; He who should bruise the head of the serpent, or Satan, that is, should destroy his kingdom, and abolish death, the very essence of his kingdom of darkness, 1 Cor. xv. 25, 26, "For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." So will he bruise the serpent's head: but the serpent should only "bruise his heel"—that is, he should be permitted to afflict and persecute the promised seed, and all his members. But, although he should have power to harrass them, yet it is only the mortal part of Christ's members that Satan is permitted to destroy: he was permitted to smite poor Job with boils, but he must not touch his life—no, he is a chained enemy. Thus he was permitted, by his infernal craft, so to debauch the will and understanding of a portion of the human race, that, in their hellish rage, they sought to destroy the Lord of life and glory. But he was not to be holden of death; it was only his heel, his mortal

part, the serpent was permitted to bite : that is as far as he is able to go against the servants of God ; and what he plots for their destruction tends to their eternal profit, and their crown of joy.

“ When death and hell shall be destroyed, and cast into the lake of fire,” where nothing but blackness and darkness reigns for ever, which is the second death, banishment from the presence of the Lord. For to dwell with and in Christ is life, but to be banished from him is death. But to the text again.

Verse 16. “ Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception : in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children ; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.”

Thus was the punishment of sin appointed as the salutary means of stirring up the enmity of mankind against Satan their enemy.

Verse 17. “ And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree,” &c. “ cursed is the ground for thy sake ; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. (18 v.) Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee ; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground ; for out of it wast thou taken : for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.”

Thus was he doomed to wear out his body by manual labour ; thus was the curse pronounced upon him, and his wife was cursed in him : she was to pine away with sorrow, with him. And soon was their cup made more bitter. When they *who just before had only to take of the fruit of the*

tree of life and live—could regale themselves at pleasure with the delicious fruits of the garden—were now about to be expelled therefrom, to feed upon the herbs of the field: which the man was doomed with toil and anxious care to cultivate, or suffer scarcity and hunger. O, the curse of sin. Sin brought sorrow, sorrow brought care, and care brought death. “But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Verse 20. “And Adam called his wife’s name Eve,” (Hebrew חַוָּה *chavah*,) which signifies living.

There appears to be more contained in the sentence just quoted than generally strikes the common reader. Adam had just been listening to the sentence pronounced against himself and his wife; but, previous to that he had notice of the promised seed, therefore joy was kindled in his soul at the thought of her still living to bear that seed, which should eventually deliver them from that awful state into which they had fallen. But a sorry life has it proved, both to them and all their posterity: for no sooner were they driven out of paradise than they found it a life of thorns and briars indeed.

Verse 21. “Unto Adam also, and to his wife, did the Lord God make coats of skins, and clothed them.” Thus were they sent forth from Eden with badges of dishonour. But, although they were badges of dishonour, yet were they tokens of mercy, inasmuch as they were types of that perfect robe of righteousness, with which Christ, the promised seed, covereth every poor returning and penitent sinner: for, no doubt, the skins they

wore were taken from the bodies of those animals offered in the first sacrifice, and which sacrifices were appointed as perpetual symbols of Christ the great sacrifice, until he should appear. And they were tokens of mercy in another point of view—for they were a confirmation of the Lord God's providential care over them, inasmuch as he would not drive them forth from the pleasant garden, where, before they transgressed, they needed no clothing—to suffer the inclemency of the weather, without supplying them with suitable raiment. Thus, with judgment did he mingle mercy.

MAN'S EXPULSION FROM PARADISE.

Verse 22. "And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil." Here is an evident sign of the plurality of persons in the Godhead, and in perfect unison with the passage I have before quoted, "Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah"—"Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."—"The Trinity in unity; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; three Persons, but one God"—the Secnd Person, the Word, which was made flesh, being the Seed of the woman promised to our first parents. And when John, in the beginning of his Gospel, wrote, "In the beginning was the Word," &c. he had reference to the "Angel of the Covenant"—the Word of the Lord which came to the prophets from olden times; even the same personage of whom David speaks. (Psalm xxxiii. 6.) "By the Word of the *Lord* were the heavens made," &c.; even Him

whose “delight was with the sons of men;” He with whom our first parents communed in Eden, and who, before the curse was pronounced for their disobedience, preached the gospel unto them.

Thus was the covenant of salvation made known to the guilty pair before the foundation of this evil world, that is, before the curse was denounced, or ever they were driven forth out of Eden—as the Greek word *κατα βολης* *kataboles*, translated foundation, Ephes. i. 4, signifies; seeing it is a compound word, composed of *κατα* *kata*, down, and *βολης* *boles*, from *βαλλο*, to cast or throw. “Chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world”—signifying that man was chosen to salvation in Christ before the prostration or casting down of the human race to labour, under the conditions of the curse. Thus was mercy proclaimed before judgment, and thus awfully did man conclude his first sabbath, by entering into a life of cursed misery and woe: but yet he had a glimmering light to cheer him through his dreary pilgrimage. O, the hatefulness of sin! which marred the first sabbath which God gave to man, wherein he had nothing to do but rejoice in his Maker, and solace himself with the delicious fruits of the garden. But, alas, from that blessed state he fell.

THE CHERUBIM OF FLAMING SWORD.

Verse 22. “The Lord God said, and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take of the tree of life, and live for ever; therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove

the great blessing the church of Christ is to the earth; for, according to ver. 32, ch. 18. Abram so interceded with God for the city, that if there had been but ten righteous men in it, he would not have destroyed it for ten's sake; and, in ver. 29, 19 ch. it states, "And it came to pass, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, that God remembered Abram, and sent Lot out of the midst of the overthrow, when he overthrew the cities in the which Lot dwelt." So that it was for Abram's sake that Lot was saved. And so is it for the sake of Christ's church that the judgments of God against the wicked are held back; for the church of Christ is "the salt of the earth," and if the church was taken from it, it would become a hell. Therefore, when the ungodly endeavour to extirpate the people of God, by such act they are trying to hasten their own destruction; as, when ten righteous men could not be found in the cities of the plain, then the reprobates were ripe for the destruction which followed. But now I will turn to a more pleasing subject.

THE BLESSING OF ABRAHAM.

Verse 14, chap. 13. "And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land, in the *length of it*, and in the *breadth of it*: for I will

give it unto thee." Therefore, in the 17th chap. 5th verse, his name is altered from Abram to Abraham, signifying the father of a great multitude.

The latter part of the above blessing is that to which I particularly invite my reader's attention, "And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered." Who can comprehend the depth and height, the breadth and length of the above promise? For, if the seed of Abraham—which is all the true believers in Christ, who hath his commandments and keepeth them—are to be multiplied as the dust of the earth for number, how dare any man presume to limit the Almighty, by saying that Christ hath only redeemed a small handful (comparatively speaking) out of the mass of mankind, whilst the rest are reprobated and left to perish—while they, in the face of that promise, give the pre-eminence in number to Satan? Such men talk incoherently, and libel the Son of God, who is not only the propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the church, but "for the sins of the whole world." 1 John ii. 2. And the same apostle, after describing his vision of the sealed ones, Rev. vii. 9, writes, "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palms in their hands." And in the 14th verse it says, "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb"—which is Christ, the very emphatical seed of Abraham, who, "when

he hath subdued all things unto himself, then shall he give up the kingdom to the Father, and God shall be all and in all." O, the grand extensive plan of human redemption, which Christ in his own time will accomplish—too vast for our finite minds to comprehend, because it extendeth to infinity—for "he saves to the uttermost all that come unto God by him," whose number is as the dust of the earth for multitude.

And let us view Abraham in whatever stage of his history we will, we shall perceive that he was constantly dwelling upon the promise, and anxiously expecting the fulfilment of the same; but he had to wait long for his son Isaac. And so is it the case generally, that when we are stirred up by a lively faith to expect some great spiritual or temporal deliverance, God will for a season try our patience, and so make us to see and understand what it is to wait upon him; for, if our patience was not exercised, we should not know what impatient creatures we are, neither should we prize the blessing so much when it comes, but perhaps set light by it. Thus we generally see that the greatest profligates and spendthrifts are those who are born to good fortunes; and such scarcely ever feel grateful to their Maker for his bountiful providence.

But God does not give his special blessings so lightly—he will be inquired of for them, and make us feel the value of them before we receive them. And thus he tried Abram, by making him wait twenty-five years before he received his beloved Isaac, which Sarah bare to him when he was an hundred years old; but while he was *waiting for his son* God renewed his promise to him

eight times. Thus, those who wait upon the Lord, do "renew their spiritual strength."

If the people of God did but listen more attentively in the way of duty to the small still voice of the Spirit, they would not be the subjects of such perplexing care as they are, but would have a filial confidence in him; being fully persuaded that all necessary blessings will come at the right time, which he has appointed, and, that if they are delayed, it is according to his secret purpose of love to us, knowing that he hath promised that "all things shall work together for good to them that fear him, and are the called according to his purpose."

And so have the purposes of God been working, though mysteriously, in all ages, to answer the one grand scheme of human redemption; and, if the limits of this work would permit, I might, with great profit and edification to myself and readers, multiply useful and practical inferences from all the most prominent characters of the lineage of Abraham; but as I do not intend to make an expensive and bulky volume, I can but very briefly notice them. I have stated before, that the whole history of the church, from Adam to the time present, is one connected and grand scheme to make known to the world the alphabet of God's providence, and to reveal to all ages the glorious name of God: and perhaps no part of the sacred history does more exemplify it, than the history of the Jews; to which I particularly wish to draw my readers' attention, and, having noticed the birth of Isaac, I now hasten to offer a few remarks upon Abraham's attempt, according

fice. Gen. xxii. 1. "And it came to pass, after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham. And he said, behold here I am. And he said, take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt-offering," &c.—which, according to the rest of the chapter, Abraham actually attempted to do; for in the tenth verse it states, "And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son."—But it may be asked, Had not God cursed Cain for murdering his brother, and expressly forbidden the crime, and declared that "Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed"—and if so, how do you justify God in tempting Abraham to break his express command? To which I answer, Abraham was well persuaded in his mind, that he who made him a father of a son in the hundredth year of his age, and his wife Sarah a mother in the ninety-first year of her age, could, although he should offer up his son as a sacrifice, raise him up and restore him to him immediately again. And such appears actually to have been the impression of his mind, from the charge he gave to his servants. Verse 5. "And Abraham said unto his young men, abide you here with the ass, and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you." So that, although, by the command of God he was going to sacrifice his son, he was fully persuaded in his mind that he would return with him again; for his son Isaac was he in whom God declared his seed should be called, 12 ver. 21 chap.; and in the 19 ver. 17 ch. *that he would establish his covenant with him*

an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him—the sign of which covenant was the ordinance of circumcision, according to the tenth verse in the same chapter. Consequently Abraham was fully persuaded in his mind that God, who had given him his beloved Isaac, and had made such glorious promises concerning him, would, to a certainty, fulfil all that he had promised him—“He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God.” Rom. iv. 20. Or, he might probably have expected that God would provide a lamb for the offering, according to Gen. xxii. 8, “And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt-offering”—which in the sequel was the case; for, verse 10, “Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son: and the angel of the Lord called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham! And he said, here am I. And he said, lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fear-est God, seeing that thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and, behold, behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt-offering in the stead of his son.”

God had expressly forbidden man to slay his fellow, therefore, although he chose to tempt Abraham, to try his fidelity to him, (not that God required such a test to convince himself of Abraham’s sincerity, but for an example of faith to all future generations,) yet he did not permit him to break his absolute law against murder; therefore

by this one instance, we discern between the commands of God and the delusions of Satan ; for it is written, John x. 35, " The scripture can be broken," and the commandment saith, " 'Thou shalt do no murder,'" God will not permit man, who is in heart like Abraham, to break a positive commandment, although he think privately to tempt him. But Satan hath, and doth prompt men to offer human sacrifices ; and awfully did he triumph in his infernal craft, when he prompted the Jews to offer their children to Moloch, Jer. vii. 31, " And they have built high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and daughters in the fire ; which I commanded not, neither came it into my heart."

Therefore we may conclude, from the fact of God's preventing Abraham from slaying his son, that whenever a man is left to do an act consciously, which the word of God expressly bids, such an one, like the Jews who offered their children to Moloch, is to a certainty deluded by Satan. Therefore, although God thought it right to try Abraham, for an example of faith to all future generations, to put their whole trust in God, giving up all for Christ, yet he would not permit him to violate his express and absolute command.

Thus much concerning that subject, and the lesson it teaches ; which I now conclude, to let us now turn to the history of Jacob and Esau, two prominent characters, whose history forms a striking contrast to the world at large that God is not a respecter of persons, but chooseth whom he listeth to be vessels of honour, to make known his name.

vealed will to poor sinners, and especially to comfort and instruct his people. Man, in his poor short-sighted judgment, supposeth this man and the other are proper persons for the special work of God, but Jehovah sees as an infinite God, and knows the end from the beginning ; and " his ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts : for as high as the heavens are above the earth, so are his ways above our ways, and his thoughts above our thoughts." Therefore, keeping these truths in view, let us be modest in deciding upon the secret decrees of God, which he has reserved to himself, and take the scriptures as they stand, and not according to the wisdom of the schools, which generally contains more sophistry than common sense, and let us learn the practical lesson which the Jacob and Esau allegory presents.

JACOB AND ESAU.

In the 25th chap. 20th verse, it states, that Isaac, in the fortieth year of his age, took Rebekah to wife. Verse 21. " And Isaac entreated the Lord for his wife, because she was barren : and the Lord was entreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived. And the children struggled together within her : and she said, if it be so, why am I thus ? And she went to inquire of the Lord. And the Lord said unto her, two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels ; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people ; and the elder shall serve the younger."

I am fully aware that the above allegorical figures, Jacob and Esau, have been used by a cer-

tain order of Christians to establish the doctrines of Absolute Election and Reprobation, which in a certain sense they do ; but, when men attempt to draw deductions therefrom, to establish the doctrine that God has predestinated certain individuals, before they were born, to a state of eternal reprobation, and hath actually created them, without any choice, power, or will on their part, for that state, and absolutely rejected them from any interest in the atonement of Christ—and that before they were born : such men teach a most blasphemous lie, and libel the character of God, who hath by his apostle declared, 1 Tim. ii. 4, that he “will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth ;” and in the 4th ch. 10th v., that he “is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.” Thus showing that all men stand in the general redemption, by the covenant made known to Adam before the foundation of this evil world, that is, before the curse was pronounced, consequently to all his posterity, who were in his loins. Yet the special election is only to those who believe, that is, to those who “hath the commandments of Christ, and keepeth them.” And, in order to understand what is meant by the allegory of Jacob and Esau, we must take the word of God as a whole, not in detached parts, here and there. Therefore when God, by his prophet Malachi, i. 2, 3, says, “I loved Jacob and I hated Esau ;” and then, in Psa. cxlv. 9, saith, “The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works ;” and in Ezek. xxxiii. 11, says unto them, “As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way.

and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?"

I say, when they meet with such texts as the above, which apparently contradict each other, they should be very cautious not to decide upon the secret decrees of God by their limited understandings; because, if God in one part of his word (as they say) hath declared that he hath created some men for eternal wrath, without any interest in the general redemption by Jesus Christ, and then in another part appeals to such men, and asks why they will die, and swears, "as I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked"—then, most evidently, according to the creed of those high doctrine teachers, (as they are called,) those two declarations contradict and destroy each other. But let us go to St. Paul, and hear what he says about the matter, who spake and wrote by the unerring Spirit of God. Therefore I will offer a few remarks upon the 9th chap. Romans, from the 14th verse, where the apostle asks concerning the matter, "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he

yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou, that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? What, if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction; and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."

Now, concerning the foreknowledge of God. We must conclude, that, "known unto him are all things from the beginning." He knew before Esau and Jacob were born, what kind of men they would be, and declared while they were yet in their mother's womb that "two nations were there, and that two manner of people should be separated therefrom." And these two children which were about to be born, although two different nations, two different types, symbolizing two opposite characters, St. Paul declares were two different vessels, made out of the same lump. Now what is meant by the same lump? Why, this: that all mankind by nature are one common lump of sinful corruption; all going astray from the womb, speaking lies. Therefore he cannot choose one any more than another, as vessels of mercy, because of their fitness, seeing none are fit until he make them so; neither can he choose others for vessels of wrath, because they are more vile in nature than the rest of mankind—for they are all one lump—but because he "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto

the knowledge of the truth," 1 Tim. ii. 4. And, inasmuch as Jesus Christ is the "Saviour of all men," 4 ch. 10 v., he hath out of the same lump, chosen some vessels in which he will show his mercy to the world, whilst others he has appointed as vessels of wrath, in which he will show his wrath and hatred to sin. But why he chooseth one for honour, and another to dishonour, it is not for us to know, because we, by our finite minds, cannot understand what is meant by "Christ subduing all things unto himself, and giving up the kingdom to the Father, when God shall be all and in all"—seeing Christ hath absolute power over all things now; therefore it must allude to something more, which he will accomplish in his own time and way. Which mystery I cannot pretend to unravel; but this I know, that, as his love is infinite to save, so are his works infinite in wisdom; for it is written, "God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all," Rom. xi. 32. He is no respecter of persons, as he showed by the two characters, Jacob and Esau; for, although, by the privilege of birthright, Esau claimed pre-eminence over his brother, who was the younger, yet God chose the younger; showing that neither birthright, title, nor any thing else, capacitates a man to be a vessel of honour, but it is of God that showeth mercy; but both are useful in his hands, to accomplish his purpose. And when we consider the characters of the two brothers, we shall see, that by nature they were both alike—both born in sin—though of different dispositions; for, according to 27th ver. "Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents."

It appears that Esau set his affections upon the sports of this world—he was a man cut out for a bustling life—but Jacob was adapted for a quiet domestic life. Esau was of an open careless disposition, adventurous and fierce in his pursuits; while Jacob was of a crafty, cunning and selfish turn of mind. Therefore each had his peculiar besetting sin; consequently God did not prefer one before the other, on account of any good quality one possessed more than the other: therefore he hath caused the infirmities of Jacob to be recorded, as well as those of his brother Esau, to show to after generations, that he, without any respect to persons, chooseth some to be vessels to honour, and some to dishonour, 2 Tim. ii. 21.

Now, if we consider the family of Isaac (as it then was) the church of Christ upon earth, which church of Christ, in Eph. vi. 10, is called “the household of faith,” we shall then see the need of vessels of dishonour as well as vessels of honour; as, in 2 Tim. ii. 20, the same apostle writes concerning the same house, that it contains vessels, “some to honour, and some to dishonour”—some made of gold and silver, some of china, some of glass—which are used for honourable purposes—others of wood, iron, or common earthenware, as occasion may require, equally as useful in the common drudgery of the house, as the richer vessels for the luxurious comforts of the family. Just so is it the case with the household of God’s church upon earth; he makes the vessels of wrath or dishonour in their place to serve his purpose, as well as the vessels of honour—he does nothing by chance, but all are in his hands, to complete *the one grand scheme of human redemption*;

therefore our blessed Lord said, "It must needs be that offences come; but woe be to him by whom the offence cometh." And, when men for years go on trifling with sin, against the warnings of the Holy Spirit, they know not how soon God may give them up to be "vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction," that is, given up to be rods in the hands of God, to chasten his people for backsliding from him, or to persecute them unto death, even as Judas, the "devil," did to Christ, and irrevocably destroy themselves—even as Esau trifled with his birthright until he lost it; but which birthright was only temporal, yet a type of the spiritual, which he sold for "a mess of pottage." "What profit," said Esau, "shall this birthright do to me?" Thus he set light by his privileges; and thus is it recorded as a warning to others not to despise their gospel privileges, or barter them away for this world's goods; for, as Esau despised his birthright and lost the future blessing, so they who despise the general redemption by Christ, will lose the blessing of regeneration, of which that temporal blessing which Jacob defrauded his brother of, was a type. And, although Jacob in his heart valued the birthright, and the blessing which it led to, yet the means he took to get possession of them cannot, by the word of God, be commended: First, he saw his brother faint for want of food, and would not give him any of his pottage to eat, unless he first made over his birthright to him, and, next, he defrauded him of his blessing by a most daring lie, which was put into his mouth by his mother—and smartly did God chastise him for it after, for very soon he was forced to fly from

his father's home, to escape his brother's vengeance, and entered into the service of his uncle Laban, who agreed to give his beautiful daughter Rachel to him for wife, as a remuneration, for whom Jacob was to serve him seven years. But, as he deceived his brother, so his uncle deceived him, by giving his sore-eyed daughter Leah in her stead ; after which he demanded seven years further services for Rachel. Thus he served him fourteen years for his two daughters, and six years for the cattle which he possessed after he left his uncle's service ; in the whole twenty years. In which period his wages were changed ten times. Thus did he receive stripe after stripe. But heavier blows were still in reserve for him ; as, when he was bereaved of his beloved Joseph ; but, notwithstanding all his infirmities, his heart was Godward, who made all his seeming calamities to work together for his good, and the accomplishment of his covenant.

But his brother Esau, instead of humbling himself before God for his folly, gave himself up to study how he could revenge himself upon his brother, and likewise insult and grieve his father, by taking unto himself wives of the daughters of Canaan, which he knew was contrary to the will of his parents. For, notwithstanding he had irreversibly lost the pre-eminent temporal blessing, he ought to have been grateful for the blessing he had got, and humbled under the chastisement he received for despising the birthright, which entitled him to the other. But God, who is infinite in wisdom, ordained him as a type of the world, and Jacob as a type of the church, to show to future ages, that, as those who set their

affections upon the vanities of the world go on from death unto death, so such who set their hearts upon the things of God, notwithstanding all their infirmities, go on from righteousness unto holiness. But, nevertheless, if the children of God have recourse to unlawful means to accomplish their desires, the rod will to a certainty follow—“ For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”

Thus the Almighty acts according to his own wisdom, and, although his ways appear strange, and often unjust to us, yet, no doubt, if we could see the end from the beginning as he sees it, we should with rhapsodies proclaim, that love alone crowns all his wonderous acts; for he is a God of love, and “ very pitiful”—and if his love be infinite, surely it must transcend the limits of the curse. Therefore it is not for man, by his debased understanding, to decide the eternal destiny of the vessels of dishonour, but leave it to him who has declared, that at the day of judgment “ it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for” those who wickedly resisted the clearer light of gospel times; for, if there are to be gradations of punishment in the future state of the wicked, then must their abode of misery be something very different from what is described by those who, from the figurative terms fire and brimstone, conclude hell to be a great gulf of red hot liquid fire and brimstone, in which the lost souls are to be rolling for ever and ever; for, if hell be such a place, then can there be no gradation of torment, because all would be in the same condition.

But the terms fire and brimstone, storm and

tempest, I conjecture to signify the horrible forebodings of wrath to come, and the tormenting pangs of an awakened and guilty conscience, which is called "the worm that never dieth." And no doubt the day of judgment will be as widely different from what we conjecture, as the east is from the west; as we may reasonably conclude from the facts, that all the prophecies which have had their fulfilment, were accomplished in a way quite contrary to all human conception.

Therefore let us leave his secret decrees in his hands, keeping in view this truth, that he is a God of love, that his love is infinite, that he dispenseth it with infinite justice, truth, righteousness, and mercy; therefore he must do all things right—so shall have the pre-eminence in all things, and "shall be all and in all."

Such will be the full consummation of that blessed covenant to be worked out by Christ Jesus, the "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." Isa. ix. 6, 7. And I humbly trust those remarks will induce my readers to seek more earnestly to understand and imbibe the lesson they were designed to teach, rather than to pry into the secret of the Why and the Wherefore one was predestinated to be a vessel of honour, and the other a vessel of dishonour; ever remembering this grand truth, that God will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth; that is, he will have mercy upon every poor sinner that confesseth and forsaketh his sins; but such as wickedly do *despite to his Spirit*, and continue on in their

wickedness, and “turn aside to their own crooked way, the Lord will lead them forth with the workers of iniquity.”

Therefore, if a man be lost, it is because he reprobates himself. And, what scriptural authority has any to conclude, that Esau, as respects his eternal state, was a reprobate? They have none whatever. For it does not follow, that, because God rejected him from being the seed from which the Mosaic dispensation was to spring, (for that is what is meant by God hating him, and nothing more,) that he was cut off from all the benefits of the redemption by Jesus Christ; for, if so, then were all strangers, not of the lineage of Jacob, in the like predicament; which was not the case; for the Lord, by the mouth of his prophet Isaiah, (lvi. 6, 7,) saith, “Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him, and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the sabbath from polluting it, and taketh hold of my covenant; even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called a house of prayer for all people.” Therefore, although Jacob was especially preferred before Esau, to perpetuate the patriarchal lineage of the church of Christ, it does not follow that Esau was cut off from all spiritual interest in that covenant of redemption which was promised to Abraham, before the sign of circumcision was given unto him. Therefore, as the stranger that was admitted into the fellowship of the Jewish church, although not permitted to offer sacrifices

as a priest at the altar, yet was privileged to share in the spiritual blessings of that altar; so likewise Esau, although rejected by God from exercising the priestly office of his family, which belonged by customary right to the first-born, yet was he not thereby cut off from the spiritual blessing of it, if he chose to submit to the authority of his brother, who, in the family, was made a vessel of honour, to rule over him; but, instead of that, for a time he studied revenge. But eventually he and his brother became reconciled to each other. And the last record we have in scripture personally concerning Esau, is in Gen. xxxv. 29, where the account of the death of Isaac his father is given, and that he and his brother Jacob buried him; and no account is there given of Esau's death. Therefore, as the scriptures are silent about his eternal state, let not any man presume to judge him; but let each of us look to ourselves, and "examine ourselves, whether we be in the faith"—for Christianity is a personal thing. And when one asked our blessed Lord, "Are there few that be saved?" he did not satisfy his curiosity, but replied, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Luke, xiii. 23, 24. And here I conclude my observations upon the history of Jacob and Esau; having shown by the allegory that God is no respecter of persons.

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN.

The next theme I wish to draw my readers' attention to, is the love of Christ to poor sinners, even whilst they are enemies to him; to exemplify

which I will bring forth another allegory, even Joseph and his Brethren, Gen. 37th chap.; according to which it appears, that Jacob loved his son Joseph more than all the rest of his brethren, (who were eleven in number;) and, because he was the son of his old age, he made him a coat of many colours, as a signal mark of his love. All which, conjoined with two singular dreams which Joseph had, caused his brethren to hate him, and at last conspire together to kill him. But, through the intercession of one of his brethren, Reuben, his life was spared; and they, by Reuben's persuasion, cast him into a dry pit, he hoping by that means to restore him to his father again; but some Ishmaelite merchants coming past on their camels, as they were journeying to Egypt, they immediately agreed together to sell him to them, —which they did,—and by that means he was transported to Egypt; where, after enduring much persecution, he was exalted to be ruler over all the land of Egypt, and made next in dignity to Pharaoh the king, in consequence of his interpreting a dream which the king had dreamed; for, after his magicians and wise men declared their inability to explain it, the dream, and the interpretation of it, was by inspiration of God given to Joseph—by which he foretold to the king that seven years' plenty and seven years' famine were coming to pass. And when the said famine became very grievous over all the face of the earth, and Jacob their father heard that there was plenty of corn in Egypt, he sent his sons thereto, to buy some. See from chapters 37 to 46.

How mysteriously does God work, to bring his designs about? Who would have supposed, when

God told Abraham (15 ch. 13 ver.) that his seed should be as strangers in a land that was not theirs, and there be afflicted four hundred years, that the prediction would be brought to pass in such a wonderful manner? So strange did the whole matter appear to old Jacob, that, in the anguish of his soul he exclaimed, "All these things are against me." Ah, poor Jacob, he could not see the end of God's work from the beginning, any more than we can understand the mysterious working of his providence and grace now. But Jacob was mistaken, for he found it all right at last. And so will every man of God find at last, that every pain, every bereavement, every trial, have all been so many links in the chain of God's providences concerning him—that all was necessary to work his final sanctification; just as every circumstance connected with the history of Joseph and his brethren was, to bring about their four hundred years' captivity in Egypt. But God is not at a loss for means when he has a purpose to accomplish, and nothing with him happens by accident; all his proceedings are designed to magnify his love to fallen man; and in no part of the Old Testament is it more vividly illustrated, than in the conduct of Joseph with his brethren.

The worthy old patriarch sent ten of his sons down to Egypt to buy corn; his youngest son Benjamin he would not let go with them, lest something evil should befall him. They arrived there, and Joseph, the governor, knew them; but they knew not him; and they bowed themselves before him, with their faces to the earth, but "he made himself strange unto them, and spake roughly unto them," &c., "and remembered the

dreams which he dreamed of them." How wonderful are the ways of God; he little thought when he dreamt that he and his brethren were binding sheaves in the field, when his sheaf arose and stood upright, whilst his brethren's made obedience to his sheaf, that its accomplishment would be brought about in that manner. Verily the ways of God are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts. But he remembered his dreams, and said to them, "Ye are spies; to see the nakedness of the land are ye come." But all the while his heart glowed with love to them, as the sequel proved; and he so wisely handled the matter as to bring their sin to remembrance: therefore he accused them as being spies. To which accusation they made answer, "Nay, my lord; but to buy food are thy servants come. We are all one man's sons: we are true men, thy servants are no spies. And he said unto them, Nay, but to see the nakedness of the land are ye come. And they said, thy servants are twelve brethren the sons of one man in the land of Canaan, and behold the youngest is this day with our father, and one is not." Now was their sin probed to the core. "One is not." "And Joseph said unto them, that is it that I spake unto you, saying, ye are spies." Now their sin had found them out. And he declared by the life of Pharaoh, that they should not depart unless their youngest brother was produced. But, after they had been kept prisoners for three days, on the third day he proposed that they leave one of their brethren in prison until they carried corn to their Father, and returned again to him, bringing their youngest brother; Benjamin, with them, that so their words might be verified. But, mark the conflict

that was going on in their minds (21 ver. 42 ch.)
“ And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us. And Reuben answered them saying, Spake I not unto you, saying, Do not sin against the child? and ye would not hear; therefore, behold also his blood is required. And they knew not that Joseph understood them; for he spake unto them by an interpreter. And he turned himself about from them, and wept; and returned to them again, and communed with them, and took from them Simeon, and bound him before their eyes.”

Thus Joseph, (the son of Israel,) the type of Christ, our spiritual Joseph, although, to prove his brethren, was forced to use them roughly, yet had such love in his heart to them, at the same time, that he was forced to turn from them and weep. Then, poor awakened and broken hearted sinner, whoever thou art, be not cast down into despair at your condition, but behold the love of Christ to poor sinners, exemplified in the conduct of Joseph to his brethren; and, although you have treated your Lord and Saviour, over and over again, as bad as Joseph's brethren treated him, and he, like Joseph, sees fit to try and prove you awhile, and show you the exceeding sinfulness of sin, by bringing your sins to remembrance; know for a certainty, that all the while, like Joseph, he is full of love to you, and presently he will embrace and kiss you. For, if Joseph, who was an earthly brother, showed such love to his brethren who had so cruelly used him, how much more shall Christ, *the friend of sinners*, that sticketh closer than a

brother, in due time manifest his love to you—“ For while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.” Then take courage, for God is reconciled unto you, whether you believe it or not—although at present he may appear to deal roughly with you—just as really as Joseph ardently and truly loved his brethren, all the while he seemed to deal harshly with them.

But it is the nature of guilt to interpret mercies into judgments; and so was it the case with the sons of Jacob; for, after Joseph had sent them off with their sacks filled with corn, and likewise restored their money therein, when one of them opened his sack, to give his ass provender at the inn, he exclaimed to “ his brethren, My money is restored ; and, lo, it is even in my sack : and their hearts failed them, and they were afraid, saying one to another, What is this that God hath done unto us?” And when they told their father Jacob of all that had transpired, and how that the ruler had insisted that their brother Benjamin should be brought to him, he exclaimed, “ All these things are against me.” And so poor broken-hearted sinners often exclaim, when temptations, bereavements, and afflictions come upon them—with perhaps the hiding of God’s countenance for a season. But why should it be so, that they write such bitter things against themselves? Let them consider the case of Joseph and his brethren, and let them enter as deeply into the mystery as they will, and then will they have but a faint emblem of the love of Christ to poor sinners. And why should we be cast down because we do not have immediate deliverance? Surely, if God has waited so long for us to turn to him, and forsake our be-

setting sin, or sins, we ought to be patient in waiting for a sense of pardon, and know for a certainty that all his wise dealings with us, however dark they may appear, will in the end more clearly evidence the sincerity of our repentance; even as Joseph's conduct to his brethren proved their affectionate regard for their father, and their love to their brother Benjamin, as the remainder of the history sheweth. For when it became requisite for them to go down to Egypt again for corn, with double money in their sacks, as likewise a present to the governor, all their care was, next to the obtaining corn for their household, to return their brother Benjamin again to their father, safe and sound; and Joseph's desire was to prove them well upon that point, to see whether they were "true men," and not wholly hardened in sin, and given up to a brutish mind. And, with what anxiety did their father send them forth, and their brother Benjamin with them. "Take also your brother," (said the affectionate old Jacob, when he found he must send him, or starve, 13 ver. 43 ch.) "and arise, go again unto the man."

Poor old Jacob little thought how God was about to restore his beloved son Joseph again unto him; and, although he had exclaimed, "All these things are against me," yet, lifting his heart up to God, he could at last send them forth with a blessing, in the form of a prayer—"And God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."

Who can tell what poor Jacob felt when he offered the above ejaculation? for, no doubt, he

had many unpleasant surmisings in his mind concerning the conduct of his sons ; for he had before exclaimed, (42 chap. 36 ver.) " Me have ye bereaved of my children : Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away." From which it appears that some degree of suspicion lurked in his mind, that his son Joseph had fallen a sacrifice to the treachery of his brethren ; and it is not improbable, but that he might suspect, from their bringing their money back in their sacks, that they had been practising some fraud upon the governor of Egypt, and that, in consequence thereof, their brother Simeon was kept as an hostage, or, that they had killed him, in order to hide their villainy. Such surmisings might have risen up in his mind, when he exclaimed, " All these things are against me." But, instead of that, they were all for him ; and he at last was (notwithstanding he had come to such a doleful conclusion of the matter) enabled to commit his way to the Lord, and off he sent his sons again to get more food ; and they took likewise a present with them, " and they took double money in their hand, and Benjamin ; and rose up, and went down to Egypt, and stood before Joseph. And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to the ruler of his house, Bring these men home, and slay, and make ready : for these men shall dine with me at noon."

Thus we may learn, that, although for a season God may hide his face behind a cloud from us, yet has he a regard for us all the while ; and, now and then, to keep us from despair, treateth us with a feast of fat things, and maketh us to hang upon his word. But, although therefrom we may ga-

ther hope, yet no joyful sense of reconciliation with an offended God can we feel, until we make a full and heartfelt confession of our guilt; for no sooner does another stroke of his rod come, than we in a measure find the glimmering hope which we had recently felt, to depart from us; when our souls are again overwhelmed in guilt. Therefore, while we seek to cover our sin, guilt must torment us; for it is like a coloured glass, which, if we look through, it gives every object we view a false colouring. And so was it the case with Jacob's sons—until their sin was brought to light, and become detestable to them, they could not know Joseph as their brother; neither can any sinner view Christ as his brother and friend, until he "confesseth and forsaketh his sins." Thus David said, "When I kept silence, my bones waxed old, through my roaring all the day long: for day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer." Such was it the case with him while he kept his sin smothering in his breast. But mark the pleasing change, when he determined to confess his sin—"I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." Psalm xxxii. 3, 4, 5.

Thus the sons of Jacob could not hold brotherly communion with their brother Joseph, until they abhorred their sin; to bring them to which state, Joseph exercised them and proved them: therefore he caused them to be brought into his house, and they were afraid when they were brought *into his house*; "and they said, because of the

money that was returned in our sacks at the first time are we brought in, that he may seek occasion against us, and fall upon us, and take us for bondmen, and our asses." And when they communed with the steward concerning the matter, he answered, verse 23, "Peace be to you, fear not; your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks," &c.

Verse 26. "And when Joseph came home, they brought him the present which was in their hand into the house, and bowed themselves to him to the earth." Thus his brethren's sheaves bowed again to his sheaf. O, the wonderful ways of God! "And he asked them of their welfare, and said, Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? is he yet alive? And they answered, Thy servant our father is in good health, he is yet alive: and they bowed down their heads, and made obeisance. And he lifted up his eyes, and saw his brother Benjamin, his mother's son, and said, Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son. And Joseph made haste; for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there. And he washed his face, and went out, and refrained himself, and said, Set on bread." Verse 33. "And they sat before him, the first-born according to his birth-right, and the youngest according to his youth: and the men marvelled one at another." And well they might; for it must have appeared most mysterious to them, as they would naturally wonder how the Egyptian ruler could so exactly discern their gradations of age. "And he took and

sent messes unto them from before him : but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs. And they drank, and were merry with him."

But, although he thus showed such kindness to them, yet had he another test of their affection in reserve. They had not been sufficiently proved yet. God gave him wisdom how to sift them thoroughly. Joseph was one with them, therefore he knew well their various dispositions—so, wisely used such means as would bring out their true characters, and likewise a perfect family reconciliation.

Chap. 44. "And he commanded the steward of his house, saying, Fill the men's sacks with food, as much as they can carry, and put every man's money in his sack's mouth. And put my cup, the silver cup, in the sack's mouth of the youngest, and his corn-money. And he did according to the word that Joseph had spoken." After which they departed, as soon as it was morning ; when the steward followed after them, to enquire wherefore they had "rewarded evil for good? Is not this it in which my Lord drinketh, and whereby indeed he divineth? Ye have done evil in so doing." For by it he proved them to the quick, and brought them again to call their sin in selling their brother to remembrance. And that is what every sinner must be brought to, before he can specially claim Christ for his Saviour : but, nevertheless, as all the dealings of Joseph were mingled with love, so are all the dealings of Christ with poor sinners, to bring them to submit to him, however severe, mingled with love also ; and he *waiteth* and longs to embrace and kiss them. And

happy is it for poor sinners, when God in his providence causeth something which they are not in the present instance really guilty of, to be laid to their charge, to bring them immediately to examine themselves, and consider, like Jacob's sons, that, although they may be innocent of the present charge, yet are they guilty before God, of sinning against their brother Jesus Christ; who made himself one with us—who loved us, and gave himself a ransom for us—and who, instead of taking vengeance upon us for our cruelty to him, does, like Joseph, who was a type of him, our spiritual Joseph, exercise and prove us, and fit us to come into close communion and fellowship with him. And, most touchingly and beautifully does the conduct of Joseph with his brethren illustrate the love of Christ to sinners: he loves to see them broken-hearted for sin, for he knows well that when he has brought a poor sinner to hate his sin, that then he will prize him above all things, and not till then: and neither were the sons of Jacob fit to know and embrace Joseph as their brother, until they were brought to such condition; therefore he put the cup into Benjamin's sack, to fetch out their sin.

Verse 12. "And the cup was found in Benjamin's sack. Then they rent their clothes, and laded every man his ass, and returned to the city. And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house, (for he was yet there,) and they fell before him to the ground. And Joseph said unto them, What deed is this that ye have done? wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine? And Judah said, What shall we say unto my lord? what shall we speak? or how shall we clear our-

selves? God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants," &c.

Thus they were brought indeed to see and confess that the whole matter was the work of God, on purpose to find out their sin. "Behold," said Judah, "we are my lord's servants, both we, and he also with whom the cup is found." But Joseph replied, "God forbid that I should do so: but the man in whose hand the cup is found, he shall be my servant; and as for you, get you up in peace unto your father." Thus he tried them, to see what kind of spirit they were of, and to break down their proud and stubborn hearts, to see their sin in its true character, and so be the more able to appreciate his love to them, when he saw fit to reveal himself to them. But what a struggle had he to suppress his feelings of love to them, until the proper time?

O, then, if Joseph's love for his brethren was so superlative, who was but a man, what must be the love of Christ to sinners, who is God as well as man, and whose love constrained him to die for sinners whilst they were yet enemies to him. Then, why should any poor broken-hearted sinner despair, whilst Christ waiteth to be gracious, and, like Joseph, longs to embrace him. For, after he had heard the touching appeal of his brother Judah, for the release of his brother Benjamin, enforced by the declaration, that if the lad did not return again to his father, that the old man's hairs would be brought down with sorrow to the grave, poor Joseph could no longer restrain himself, but (chap. 45) immediately, with tears of affectionate joy, made himself known to them, proclaimed them his brethren, fell on their neck,

and kissed them, bid them go and fetch his father to him, and cautioned them not to fall out by the way ; assuring them that it was not them, but God, that had sent him before them into Egypt, to preserve their lives. And thus was the prayer of their father answered far beyond his most sanguine expectations.

And when they came to their father, and told him that Joseph was yet alive, his heart fainted, for he believed them not : yet when he saw the waggons which Joseph had sent to carry him, his spirit revived ; and he said, "It is enough ; Joseph my son is yet alive : I will go and see him before I die." Thus at last he found it all well, all right : and so does every saint, at his journey's end, find that the way which God hath led him all his life through, was the right way. And Israel said (chap. 48, ver. 11) to Joseph, "I had not thought to see thy face ; and, lo, God hath showed me also thy seed." So can the dying saint in Christ say, I did not think, when darkness and temptation was at one time overwhelming me, and the distracting cares of this world perplexing me, and the hypocrisy of my own evil heart deceiving me, that ever I should see the king in his beauty ; but now I see that my blessed Lord and Saviour hath made all these things to work together for my good ; they are the means by which he hath weaned me from the world, and now I find my all in Christ, "who is made unto me wisdom, righteousness, justification, sanctification, and redemption ;" and I can say, "Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

Thus does the saint of God at last triumph

over all those sinful corruptions with which he hath had to fight against, all through his christian warfare; and, as Jacob (ver. 16) gave all praise to the Angel of the covenant, who redeemed him, and fed him all his life long, so does every saint likewise give all the glory to Jesus Christ, the same redeemer—for by his stripes alone we are healed. And the man that patiently and thankfully submitteth to the chastening of the Lord, will to a certainty become tender under his righteous discipline; for, although we take shame to ourselves for needing the stripes of his rod, yet, if we are in a right and humble spirit, we shall be enabled to thank him heartily for them, and rejoice in tribulations; seeing that “tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope.” O, that christians would but be more diligent in watching unto prayer; for, if they were, instead of going about, whining and murmuring at what they call cross providences, they would see that they are answers to prayer; and, instead, of becoming morose and crabbed, they would feel thankful and full of love to God for hedging up their way, to keep them from straying from him. It is the want of such a spirit that causes such lukewarmness in the church of Christ, and such backsliding from the simplicity of the truth; and that is the reason why God is casting her into the furnace of persecution at this present time, that she may rouse up, and shake herself from the dust of the world—from which good Lord deliver her. Amen, and amen.

After good old Jacob was buried, it appears that Joseph's brethren were apprehensive that he would hate them, (chap. 50, ver. 15,) therefore

they besought him to pardon them for their sin, in selling him to the Ishmaelitish merchants ; but when he beheld their fear, he wept over them—he loved them still. They measured their brother's love by their own selfishness ; their guilty consciences told them what they deserved—even as the conscience of every sinner that is awakened to his true condition tells him that he deserves no mercy, but vengeance, his just reward. But, mark the love of Joseph, when they came to prostrate themselves before him ; he, instead of taking vengeance on them, wept tears of compassion over them, and “ said unto them, (ver. 19.) Fear not : for am I in the place of God ? But as for you, ye thought evil against me ; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive. Now therefore fear ye not : I will nourish you, and your little ones. And he comforted them, and spake kindly unto them.”

Thus was Joseph a type of Christ, who, while his murderers were standing round and mocking him, Luke xxiii. 34, cried, “ Father, forgive them ; for they know not what they do.” Then, if a poor sinner longs for a manifestation of the love of Christ to his soul, let him contemplate the love of Joseph to his brethren, and then consider that the love of Christ to poor sinners, as far transcends the love of Joseph as the heavens are high above the earth : and, surely, then will he find a fountain of love, at which he may solace himself, and rejoice in God, though *all* other things may be darkness and confusion around him.

THE BONDAGE OF THE ISRAELITES.

The next subject I wish to draw my readers' attention to, is the oppression of the Children of

Israel in Egypt, after a king arose who knew not Joseph—according to chap. 15, ver. 13, that they should be “afflicted four hundred years.” Which prediction had its full accomplishment, according to Exod. i., in which it is recorded, that when the Children of Israel had multiplied abundantly, and waxed exceeding mighty, that the Egyptian monarch became jealous of them, and set task-masters over them, to afflict them by most grievous labour, so that they actually became slaves to the king of Egypt. But at length, when their oppression became too grievous to be endured, then God rose up a man, by whose agency he delivered them, and whose birth and adaptation to the work was brought about in a most miraculous manner; for, as it is recorded, the king, in order to diminish the race of the Hebrews, ordered the Hebrew midwives, when they performed the office of midwife, that if they saw it was a son that was born, they were immediately to kill it. But they obeyed not his orders; at which the king was wroth, and rebuked them for their disobedience, and then commanded his own people to execute the cruel edict. But God was about to frustrate his design.

THE BIRTH OF MOSES.

Exod. ii. 1. “A man of the House of Levi took to himself a daughter of Levi;” and she bare him a son, whose birth was kept secret for three months; and when she could no longer hide him, she made an ark of bulrushes, and covered it with slime and pitch—put the child therein, and hid it among the flags at the river’s brink; when, the king’s daughter coming with her maids down to the river to wash herself, discovered it, took

opened, and found it to contain a child—and behold it wept; at which her compassion was moved, and she said, this is one of the Hebrew children; when immediately the sister of the child, who had been appointed to watch the fate of her brother, presented herself to Pharaoh's daughter, and said, "Shall I go and call a nurse to thee, of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee? To which the princess answered, go. When the maid went and called the child's mother. And when she was come, Pharaoh's daughter commanded her to take the child and nurse it for her, (not knowing she was its mother,) to which the mother, as might be supposed, readily complied, and Pharaoh's daughter promised to pay her for her service. And when the child had arrived to a proper age, the mother presented him to Pharaoh's daughter, who adopted him as her son. Thus did God bring about the deliverance of the child from the cruel edict, in a most wonderful manner, and even used the despot's own daughter as a principal instrument to accomplish the same, and caused her to raise up a man which should be the means, in his hands, of delivering the whole Jewish nation from their cruel bondage.

Thus the christian may learn, that, although the rulers of the earth rise up against God, yet his purposes must stand; and, that he can make his bitterest enemies, against their own will, to work out his designs. Thus was the cruel decree of the wicked king the means of causing the Leviite's child to become the foster-child of his daughter, and his court the nursery in which the child was reared, until the time arrived when he

should begin to enter upon the work of rescuing his nation from the grievous bondage of their cruel task-masters.

Verse 10. "And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son : and she called his name Moses ; and she said, because I drew him out of the water."—As his name מֹשֶׁה *Mousheh* signifies to draw—a name significant of the work he was predestinated for, namely, to draw his countrymen from the tyrannical bondage of Egypt, lead them through the Red Sea, until they were landed safe in the wilderness on the other side. Verse 11. "And it came to pass in those days, when Moses was grown, that he went out unto his brethren, and looked on their burdens : and he spied an Egyptian smiting an Hebrew, one of his brethren. And he looked this way and that way, and when he saw that there was no man, he slew the Egyptian, and hid him in the sand."

Thus we see that Moses forgot not his own nation ; and, although he had been brought up in the splendour of the Egyptian court, yet, all that he despised, for his brethren's sake. And, however the opponents of scripture may affect to censure him for slaying the Egyptian, yet, no doubt, from the cruelty with which he had seen his brethren treated, conjoined with the natural consequences connected with his conflict with the Egyptian, he felt justified in slaying him. But when he perceived that the deed was found out, he fled for his life to the land of Midian ; where, after a while, according to chap. 3, "The Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire, out of the midst of a bush ; and he looked, and,

behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed."

Thus the bush was a lively emblem of the church of Christ through all ages, and especially the Jewish nation : for, notwithstanding Satan has raised up his emissaries in every stage of the church, to harrass, perplex, and destroy her, yet is she not consumed—for God is in the midst of her. And the Jewish church and nation, who, for their wickedness, have been partially cast off by God, and dispersed into all the nations of the earth, have, by the mighty power of God, notwithstanding all the Satanic rage of her enemies, been preserved still as a nation ; and yet not (according to prophecy) counted with the nations, but remains a separate and peculiar people—a special example to all the nations of the earth, of the righteousness, justice, holiness, long-suffering, and mercy of God ; who saw it requisite, in order to make his glorious name known to all the earth, to have a peculiar people, not numbered with the nations, elect vessels of honour, to enlighten the world ; but whom God caused first to go into bondage, that, when they came to possess the promised land, they might be humbled, when they thought of that state of degradation which God had, with a mighty hand, brought them out of, and have pity upon the stranger who should desire to join himself to them. And as, when their bondage became too grievous to be borne, and they cried unto the Lord, and he delivered them, with mighty judgments, so every believer in Christ, who feels the bondage of sin, hates it, and cries to be delivered from it, may thereby be encouraged to believe that they shall surely be

delivered from their spiritual bondage; and, as when the Jews were about to be suddenly thrust out of Egyptian bondage, God gave them favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they gave them whatsoever they desired, so may the church of Christ in all ages be cheered with the thought, that God can make even their enemies to serve them, even as he caused the ravens to feed Elijah. And, whether the opponents of scripture like to reject the historical account of the miraculous judgments by which God delivered the Jews from their Egyptian bondage, or believe it, it matters very little, as far as respects the confirmation of the fact, seeing that the Jews now are a living miracle to confirm the truth of holy writ, which all the sophistry of infidels cannot overthrow. Therefore, the true believer taking a view of the history of the Jews, whether in their state of Egyptian bondage, their journey through the wilderness, their possession of Canaan, their various captivities, or their final and utter dispersion—he can therefrom learn the mind of God concerning himself, under whatever condition, spiritual or temporal, he may be placed; for, as sure as the Jews were visited with certain judgments for special sins, so may every man know for a certainty, that if he be in the same condition, most assuredly the same punishment will follow him; so that every man may there read his own doom, and every man know his own state. Therefore God has caused the infirmities of his people to be recorded, as well as their virtues, that thereby men may know what the exceeding sinfulness of sin is—that the man of God may learn, that if he, like David, transgress, he shall,

like him, be restored again, with many and bitter stripes—that sin brings long seasons of darkness and despair, and the hidings of God's countenance—that if a man backslide from God, he has no power to restore himself to repentance, but must, like David, go mourning without the sun, until God please of his mercy to restore him again; and when such melting seasons arrive, they are to the poor returning backslider the most joyful seasons of his life. Tears of repentance are not tears of sorrow but of joy; for, although the poor sinner, at such seasons, feels exceeding compunction for, and hatred to his sins, yet such brokenness of heart makes Christ so precious to his soul, that the sense of reconciliation through his blood administers such joy to him, that he has not power to express; and frequently, when darkness is gathering around him, the calling to mind those precious seasons, afford him such refreshings that he would not barter away for the treasures of the whole world. For what is the world, when compared to the love of God in the soul—the knowledge of Christ, and the power of his resurrection?

Such is the use the true christian makes of the word of God, whilst infidels, with all their sophistry, are tempest-tossed, amidst the moral darkness of this world, and "are like the troubled sea," continually casting up mire and dirt; and, in order to disannul the word of God, they ridicule the idea of miracles, and endeavour to bring into contempt whatever in that word they find, apparently, contrary to the laws of nature, until at last they become such fools as to deny the existence of the God of nature.

Having made these few general remarks concerning the lesson which the state of the Jews, under their bondage in Egypt, and their journey through the wilderness, &c. conveys to the spiritual reader, who makes the word of God a lamp unto his feet, and a light unto his path, I now enter upon the subject of miracles.

JOSHUA COMMANDING THE SUN AND MOON TO STAND STILL.

Joshua x. 12. "And he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies."..."So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it, or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man."

I am well aware that the opponents of the scriptures often produce the above passage, as a proof that the philosophy of the Bible is at variance with indisputable philosophical facts, according to the Newtonian system. They assert, that, as it is an established fact, beyond all doubt, that the sun is the centre around which all the other planets of its system revolve, the circumstance of Joshua commanding the sun to stand still, proves the scriptures to be anti-philosophical, inasmuch as from the passage we must conclude the Bible teaches, that the earth stands still while the sun runs round it. But if the original text be carefully examined, we shall soon discover that their *premises* are unscriptural. I have in the former

part of this work shown that there are three terms which are applicable to the sun, the first is חֶרֶשׁ *cheres*, the solar orb; the second, חַמָּה *cham-mah*, its heat or flame; and the third, שָׁמֶשׁ *shamesh*, the rays of the sun in action; all which terms our translators have confounded together, to express the same thing.

Now, in handling this passage, I am not trying to do away with the miracle, because I believe that a miracle was performed; but the question I wish to decide is, that the philosophical objection which some persons raise against the text is erroneous; the word in the text translated sun, is שָׁמֶשׁ *shamesh*, a term denoting the action of the rays or particles of light upon the densities of the atmosphere, as they shoot from חֶרֶשׁ *cheres*, the solar orb, at mid-day. So that Joshua did not command the solar orb itself to stand still, but the daylight, caused by the confliction of the sun's rays with the densities of the atmosphere; for, as I have stated before, we cannot have light without motion; and, as a further proof that Joshua's command could not have had reference to the solar orb, but to the rays of light proceeding therefrom, it is evident, from the circumstance of his commanding it to "stand still on the valley of Gibeon." Now, it was not the solar orb חֶרֶשׁ *cheres* which was thus stationed upon the valley, but its light; therefore the text might have been more correctly rendered, "Solar light, be thou still on the valley of Gibeon." But, let it be which way it would, still it was a miraculous interposition of God, by which the general laws of nature were, for a time, apparently set aside—I say apparently, because we know not but that

the laws of motion, by which the planetary worlds are governed, may in principle be similar to those of animals, and may be so contrived by the great Architect, that (like animal bodies) one department may for a time cease to perform its proper functions, whilst in the other departments the balance of nature may not be destroyed; for I can see no more difficulty in the Almighty causing one portion of the solar system to have its laws of motion for a season suspended, whilst the other departments are performing their proper motions, than it is for a man to have a portion of his body paralyzed, while the rest of his body is performing the functions of life. And the same remarks may serve for

THE SUN GOING BACK TEN DEGREES ON THE DIAL OF AHAZ.

Isaiah xxxviii. 8. "Behold, I will bring again the shadow of the degrees, which is gone down in the sun-dial of Ahaz, ten degrees backward. So the sun returned ten degrees, by which degrees it was gone down."

In this quotation, likewise, the word *שֵׁמֶשׁ* *she-mesh* is used, referring to the rays of the solar orb, or the light of the sun; but here likewise a miracle was performed, as in the case of Joshua, only with this variation, that in Joshua's case the light stood still, while in that of Hezekiah it went back; to which I give a short answer—that it was as easy for God to make the earth, which he had ordained to revolve upon its own axis from west to east, to traverse ten degrees back westward, as it is for a watchmaker, who has designed the hands of a watch, to traverse the dial from left to

right, to make the minute-hand go ten hours back to the left, without injury to the harmony of the whole; and some watches are so curiously constructed, that even the winding of them up does not in the least obstruct their motion.

SAMSON'S STRENGTH.

I now come to consider Samson's extraordinary strength—a subject much ridiculed by infidels. But if men persist in rejecting miracles, because they are beyond their comprehension, they may as well deny their own existence. But, respecting Samson's extraordinary strength, I, without hesitation, assert, that it was not contrary to the laws of nature, but the laws of nature extended beyond their ordinary limits—a circumstance which has occurred thousands of times since, though more circumscribed as to its degree. I have before observed, that spirit alone is the only principle of intelligence and power; therefore, as God is a spirit, and the only omnipotent spirit, the very fountain of strength, it follows, that man, whom he created in his own image, was in his perfect state constituted capable of being filled with that power to a degree far beyond what we, in our present fallen, weak, degraded condition, can imagine. Who can measure the limits of spiritual power? who can understand the mystery of spiritual agency, by which the spirit of a man, confined within the limits of his earthly frame, can be so inflamed as to heat his frenzied reason into madness, when he, with strength supernatural, will with ease burst the treble cords or chains by which he is bound, though perhaps it might have taken seven men

as strong as he, when in health, to have accomplished the feat? Then, if a man, under Satanic agency, can manifest such supernatural strength, how much more mighty must a man be, when filled with the Spirit or power of God? And the first quickning of nature is ascribed to the Spirit of God, and all knowledge and power is ascribed to the same—who is the Spirit of wisdom, Exod. xxviii. 3; Spirit of understanding, Isa. xi. 2; Spirit of truth, John xiv. 17; Spirit of promise, Ephes. i. 13; Spirit of prophecy, Rev. xix. 10; Spirit of grace, Zech. xii. 10; Spirit of glory, 1 Pet. iv. 14; Spirit of counsel and might, Isa. xi. 2; Spirit of adoption, Rom. viii. 15. And, as in the kingdom of grace, the Holy Spirit is declared to be the active principle of life, so, in the natural creation, (which is a type of the spiritual,) it is most evident, that spirit alone is its vital, active principle of life, the perfect fluid light, which, in a greater or less degree, is infused throughout the same—a mysterious agent, by concentration of which, a power of expansion may be obtained almost, or, for aught I know, absolutely infinite. Therefore, if the Almighty Creator has infused into nature such an infinite principle of power, that man cannot ascertain its limits, why should any man doubt the possibility of the omnipotent power of God being communicated to man, who was created in his own likeness.

But the true likeness of God man hath lost, and of himself can only manifest that weakness which the curse of sin hath brought him to; and, notwithstanding all his pretensions to moral rectitude, he by nature is but a vile impotent creature, with a disposition to prostitute all he hath

to the service of Satan : and the truth of these observations every believer in Christ can confirm from what he feels within, when he perceives that he has a " law in his members, warring against the law of his mind," constantly striving to bring him under the law of sin and death ; and, although a new principle of life, the love of Christ, be implanted in his heart, yet does he find, that the world, the flesh, and the Devil, are such foes, that, like as David was afraid that he should one day fall by the hand of Saul, so he often with sorrow exclaims, " I shall one day fall by the hands of these uncircumcised Philistines." And such has been the condition of the church of Christ in all ages, of whom Samson was a lively type ; concerning which I will make a few remarks, therefore shall refer to Judges xiii. 2. " And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah ; and his wife was barren, and bare not. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto the woman, and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bear-est not : but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son," &c. Ver. 5. " For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son ; and no razor shall come on his head : for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb ; and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines." Thus was he to be set apart from the world, to execute the particular work of God. Just so, the church of Christ is called to " come out from the world, and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing." And, as we read of Samson, in the 25th verse, that " the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in the camp of Dan," so the church of

Christ, in the pentecostial times, manifested the power of the Spirit in a most wonderful manner, when she, like Samson, was in her Nazarite state—when, like the flowing locks of Samson, her purity of love and good works flourished most abundantly; and, as long as Samson arrayed himself against the enemies of Israel, so long was the strength of God with him. Just so was it the case with the primitive church; as long as she earnestly arrayed herself against the world, so long was she mighty in word and deed; but, like as Samson, by lying and slumbering in the lap of his harlot Delilah, was at last shorn of his locks, deprived of his eye-sight, and made the sport of his enemies, so likewise the church of Christ, when she began to repose at ease in the lap of worldly pleasure, and was taken with the lust of worldly pomp, so soon did she come into a state of weakness and blindness, setting up the carnal ordinances of men in the stead of the word of God, until she became the sport and ridicule of the profane world; even as Samson was the sport of the Philistines, when they had put out his eyes. But when his hair began to grow, ch. 16, ver. 22, the lords of the Philistines began to give all the praise to Dagon their idol god. Verse 24. "Our god," said they, "hath delivered into our hands our enemy, and the destroyer of our country, which slew many of us." When, after they had forced him to grind in the prison-house, they brought him forth therefrom into the house of Dagon their idol, to make them sport. Ver. 25. "And he made them sport: and they set him between the pillars. And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel

the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them." Verse 28. "And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand, and of the other with his left. And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might; and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were therein: so the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life." Thus, as Samson, when his eyes were put out, made sport for his enemies, who gave praise to their god, so the church, who, after having been made to grind in the prison-house of persecution, under the bloody and cruel tyranny of a set of anti-christian popes, became the sport of her persecutors, who exultingly imagined, that, because they had taken from her the written word of the old and new testaments, and so put out her eyes, they had gained a complete triumph over her: the church of Christ at that time did begin to show signs of returning strength; for, like as Samson made use of the lad to guide him to the pillars that supported the house of their idol, and began to terribly shake them, so did the church, in the person of Luther, at the time of the Reformation, (when her enemies fancied themselves most secure,) by faith lay hold on the pillars of the church of Rome—the "scarlet whore, the mother of harlots, drunk with the blood of the

saints"—and shook them to the very foundations, and still they are shaking, and I hope destruction will be complete, as likewise every anti-christian doctrine in existence so, amen, is the hearty prayer of the author.

THE EVIDENCE OF PROPHECIES

In entering upon the evidence of prophecies, I shall be very brief, inasmuch as there is a good and cheap work, entitled "Keith on Prophecy," published by the Religious Tract Society, in which all the leading prophecies of the scriptures, with their literal fulfilment, are narrated in such a lucid manner, that it is possible for the most obstinate opponents of scripture, if they be honest, to controvert the evidence of the truth of the scriptures, which the author of the work adduceth therefrom. Therefore I will only notice that the birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ the Saviour of the world, the promised seed announced by the voice of God to the first parents, as likewise the opposition to the kingdom of God should meet with from the seed of the serpent, the powers of darkness, forms the subject of all the prophecies, from the first chapter of Genesis to the last verse of Revelations; so exactly were all the peculiar circumstances of his birth, the kind of life he would live, the treatment he would receive at the hands of his countrymen, the death they would put him to, the most singular coincidences connected with, foretold by the prophecies of the Old Testament, that it is impossible for any honest man to doubt the truth to be mistaken as to their meaning.

But the infidel will answer, Ah, it is

enough for a book to be so compiled by a set of cunning impostors, as to make the prophecies of the old testament and the history of Christ harmonize together. To which I answer, that the very men who were the immediate instruments of causing the circumstances of the death of Christ to perfectly coincide with the prophecies concerning the same, were of all men the most unlikely for the purpose, inasmuch as they were his bitterest enemies, and whose posterity, although still retaining all the prophecies concerning him, as the infallible word of God, yet remain his implacable foes. Therefore, the prophecies concerning Christ, and their exact accomplishment, could not possibly have been brought about by the cunning craft of man, seeing that many of those prophecies were delivered hundreds of years prior to his advent, which the Jews themselves, although his enemies, are forced to acknowledge. For Moses, one thousand four hundred and fifty-one years before his birth, prophesied of him thus, Deut. xviii. 15, "The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken," &c. And, again, Isaiah, ix. 6, nine hundred and forty years prior to his birth, prophesied of him thus, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end," &c. And Zechariah, xi. 12, five hundred and eighty-seven years before the event, prophesied concerning the price for

which he was to be betrayed, in these words, "So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them!" &c.

But I might go on, multiplying my texts to a vast extent upon the subject, for the Bible is full of them, as may be seen in the valuable book I have before referred to. But it matters not what evidence may be produced in favour of the scriptures to such persons, whose heads are right, whilst their hearts are wrong; some of whom are fool-hardy enough to deny that ever such a person as Jesus Christ existed, notwithstanding it is a fact better attested and supported by corroborative evidence than any other historical fact that was ever recorded. And, although the Jews are the bitterest enemies of Christ, yet have I never met with one of that nation that would attempt to deny it. But the honest enquirer after truth, who sincerely wishes to be set right, may soon be convinced; because the more he studies his character, the more he sees of the holiness and lowness of it; and the more he is made to know of the corruption of his own heart, the more he sees the need of such a Saviour; and the deeper he searches for evidence that such a Saviour existed, and died for lost sinners, the more clear does the fact stand forth. He reads, Gen. xlix. 10, where the good old patriarch Jacob, in delivering a prophetic blessing to his son Judah, says, (alluding to the period of the coming of the Saviour into the world,) "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, *until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gather-*

ing of the people be." He next refers to the historical account of the birth of Christ, and finds that it occurred at the very time when the Jews were without a king of their own, and ruled by Roman authority. And when he finds that his life, death, and resurrection, with every circumstance connected therewith, were in perfect harmony with all the prophecies concerning him, he is perfectly satisfied upon that point; therefore is induced next to examine the doctrines he taught, and the holy and lovely example he set; and, to his admiration and astonishment, he finds that his whole life was spent in doing good; that the example he set and the precepts he taught, were in opposition to the villainy and hypocrisy of the age in which he performed his mission; that he went about doing good, healing all diseases, casting out devils, &c. by the mighty power of God—thereby proving that he was equal with God; and, by the visible manifestation of the love of God, that he was the friend of sinners, and the Saviour of the world—the mighty God, and yet the lowly Man—God and Man in one person; who, according to human wisdom, took the most unlikely method of establishing his kingdom; because, contrary to the wisdom of the world, instead of choosing the wisest and craftiest of men to accomplish his purpose, he chose twelve poor fishermen, and took them to be witnesses of all his miraculous works of love, and sent them forth to preach his gospel.

Thus is the honest enquirer after truth led on, step by step, until convinced that the word of God is no cunningly devised fable. He reads in that blessed book, that "the testimony of Jesus is

the Spirit of Prophecy," Rev. xix. 10. And, finding that all things spoken concerning him by the old testament prophets, have, at the appointed time, received their accomplishment, he gives all glory to Christ, and receives the substance of the new testament as inspired also; and then, when he compares the two testaments together, he perceives they were both indited by the same author, and, that Christ is the sum and substance of the whole, and that in him there is everything which he needeth, whether for time or eternity; therefore casts himself upon him, and finds that in him alone he hath wisdom, righteousness ~~sanc-~~ tification, justification, and redemption; and he is enabled to rejoice in the grand truth, that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin—that through his blood we have forgiveness; and, that God in Christ Jesus is reconciling the world unto himself, and beseeches rebellious wicked sinners to be reconciled unto him; and he finds by experience, that without Christ he can do nothing, but, that by Christ strengthening him, he can do all things. Thus is the honest enquirer after truth led on from strength to strength until he is filled with the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, who is everything to him that his heart, sanctified by the Holy Spirit, can desire. Thus he goes on from righteousness unto holiness, whilst the wilful despisers of the testimony of Jesus, go on from sin unto death.

If infidels would but listen to the voice of conscience, put away their abominable wicked practices, and search the word of God with an honest motive to ascertain its truth, instead of seeking with a malicious spirit to bring it into contempt.

because it opposeth their vicious lives, they would soon be forced to bow to its authority; for there is no history in existence that is written with such impartiality, for, contrary to all the works of men, those characters whom it sets forth as examples of godliness, to such as walk uprightly before God, it likewise makes known their infirmities, as a warning to such as are backsliding from him. Therefore it is a book to guide us in all circumstances—and such the author has found it. And it is a book suitable for all ages, and all seasons. And, in all seasons of political or religious calamities, that book (if applied by the Spirit which indited it, that can make its words spirit and life to its reader) is the only thing that can give comfort and support under such seasons of distraction. For there hath no season of calamity ever occurred to mankind, nor tyrannical power ever arisen to scourge the human race, but what has been foretold in that book. Therefore, the true believer in Christ, who hath his commandments and keepeth them, is not alarmed when sudden calamities come, because he is well assured that nothing can happen contrary to the foreknowledge of God, who will make all things to work together for good to them that love and serve him. For, what do we see in the present calamitous appearance of the times? Has it not all been exactly predicted in the scriptures? And has not the rise and fall of nations happened exactly according to the predictions of the Bible? the fulfilments of which have been brought about (as I have noticed before) by the most unlikely means, according to man's judgment: for, according to the wisdom of man, it would appear insane

folly for a man of wealth and influence, to choose twelve poor, unlearned, simple-hearted fishermen, for the purpose of establishing a kingdom which should overturn and triumph over all the kingdoms of the earth. Such instruments, I say, would appear the most unlikely to accomplish the purpose. Yet such were the very kind of instruments which our blessed Lord and Saviour used to establish his kingdom.

And, what was the nature of that kingdom? Was it composed of the regal power, the pomp, the pride and vain pleasures of this world? O, no. It was a kingdom, or principle, of holiness, directly opposed to all those things; it was a kingdom at perfect enmity with the world, which the world hated, because it was not of the world. Therefore our Lord said to them, Mat. x. 16, “Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. But beware of men; for they will deliver you up to the counsels, and they will scourge you in their synagogues: and ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.” Such was the prospect before them. “Marvel not,” said our Lord, “if the world hate you, for they hated me before they hated you. But be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”

Thus did their Lord and Master prepare them for the conflict. Thus did he choose the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the things that are not (that is, not of the wisdom of the schools) to confound the things that are. *And, how was their weakness made manifest,*

when on the memorable night Judas came, with a band of men, and betrayed his master with a kiss, when "they all forsook him and fled." Mat. xxvi. 56. And Simon Peter, who appeared the boldest amongst them, and the most vehement in declaring his attachment to him, denied him, ver. 70. All which happened according as it had been predicted. Zech. xiii. 7. "Awake, O sword, against my Shephard, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered." And in Psalm xli. 9, it saith, speaking of Ahy-pothel, the type of Judas, "Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me." And, concerning the sufferings of Christ, the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah is most explicit; and in Psalm xxii. 18, alluding to the fact of the Roman soldiers casting lots for his garments after he was hung upon the cross, it is written, "They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture."

Thus were the manner of his crucifixion, and the circumstances connected therewith, predicted ages prior to its accomplishment; and the persons chosen to be witnesses of those things, twelve poor fishermen, who had shown such cowardice in forsaking their Lord in his greatest extremity; yet, directly after their Lord's resurrection, those poor cowards stand forth with boldness to proclaim that kingdom which the rulers of their own nation had determined with all their might to destroy. And Peter, who had before been terrified by a maid, to deny his Lord, was the first to open the kingdom. Mat. xvi. 18, 19, "And I say,

also unto thee, That thou art Peter ; and upon this Rock (Christ) I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." And Peter was the first to open the kingdom on the day of Pentecost, by declaring the mystery of the kingdom of Christ, as the Holy Ghost gave him utterance ; by which sermon three thousand souls were converted. Thus, by the power of the Holy Ghost was the kingdom of heaven opened, the mysteries of which kingdom were the keys which were delivered to Peter, and which, by the power of the Holy Ghost, he received power to use—a thing quite different to the heretical notion the papists have about the text.

And how has the kingdom triumphed, notwithstanding all the fury of its enemies ? And it must go on conquering, until it has destroyed all other kingdoms, according to Nebuchadnezzar's prophetic dream, Dan. ii. 31, which the prophet interpreted, and in which the kingdom of Christ is symbolized by a stone cut out of a mountain, that was to break in pieces the image which Nebuchadnezzar saw in his dream, which the prophet thus describes : " Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee, and the form thereof was terrible. This images head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron,

the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer thrashing-floors ; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them : and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.” Under the similitude of the image, is set forth the several kingdoms of the earth which should successively rise up to bear rule among the nations, which should, by the stone cut out without hands, be dashed to pieces, and scattered like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor : the golden head of which image represented the Babylonish monarchy, which then was ; the breast and arms of silver, the monarchy of the Medes and Persians, which was founded by Darius the Mede, and Cyrus the Persian, who were allied to each other, therefore are represented by the two arms inserted in one breast—which monarchy, according to scripture chronology, lasted about one hundred and thirty years ; the belly and thighs of brass, predicted the Grecian monarchy, whose founder was Alexander, and by him was conquered the last of the Persian empires. This was the third kingdom of brass ; though inferior in wealth to the other two, yet was it stronger ; and as the prediction declared that the third kingdom of brass should bear rule over all the earth, so it came to pass, for, as history records, Alexander boasted that he had conquered all the world, and then sat down and wept, because he had not another world to conquer. The fourth kingdom was to be as strong as iron : “ forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things ; and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise ? ”

structed, ye judges of the earth." Thus are the kings and judges of the earth admonished to take warning from the awful example which God made of the Jews, for rejecting and killing the Lord of life and glory.

But, how have the kings and judges of the earth regarded the admonition? Alas, they have almost invariably risen up against his righteous government, and, in their pride and cruel malice, sought to extirpate his seed from the earth. But he who saw from the beginning every thing which should transpire to the end, hath laughed at them; for, while they, in their pride and malice, have tried to root up his kingdom, they have only been fulfilling the word of prophecy; and, while they in their kingdoms have filled up the measure of their iniquity, drank to the dregs the cup of wrath, received the awful retribution of their crimes, and sank into oblivion, the church of Christ still lives, and increases; and the voice of Revelation is still arrayed in woeful sentences against them. For there is recorded in that book, in predictions awfully sublime, the rise, the progress, and direful doom of Satan's kingdom, in all the multifarious forms it would assume, from Jerusalem's overthrow by pagan Rome, until the second coming of the Lord of life and glory, with all his saints, to reign for evermore. But, before that glorious morn arrives, a long and dreary night was to elapse—a night of woes terrific, wherein six vials full of wrath are poured upon the nations, the members of the beast, the offspring of perdition—a night of "darkness which may be felt," but yet not total darkness to the church of Christ, to whom the sacred mysteries are re-

vealed. No, she by faith mounts up above the world—views Christ her blessed Lord overruling the destinies of the nations; she knows the promise, that all things shall work together for good to them that fear him, and look for his appearing. And, like as the moon catches the rays of the sun, and shines resplendent in the midnight darkness, so does the church of Christ shine resplendent with the bright righteousness of her Lord, the Sun of righteousness, and reflect his brightness to the dying world; and, though she oft hath been obscured for a season behind the dark and heavy cloud of persecution, yet, like the moon, she still her course is sailing, and, with life and immortality in view, she eyes the raging tumult of the nations, and knowing that in this world she hath no abiding city, she keeps in view her everlasting rest, where, with Christ she will for ever reign—“a city not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” Therefore she is not distracted at passing events, because she is well persuaded, that He in whom she hath believed is able to deliver her from the cruel persecution of wicked men, or else enable her to endure the same; yea, even to rejoice in persecution, being fully persuaded, that, as the Captain of her salvation entered into glory by the same path, so it must be the right way to the city of habitation.

POPERY AND INFIDELITY.

The Apostle Paul, knowing that these things must come to pass before the second coming of the Lord, (in 2 Thes. ii. from the 2nd verse,) exhorts the church in these words, "Be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand." (Referring to the coming of Christ to judgment.) "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come except there be a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth" (hindereth) "will let" (or obstruct) "till he be taken out of the way: and then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be

damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

Here is evidently a prophetic description of the deceitful and bloody church of Rome, whose head is the Pope, described as "the man of sin, who putteth himself in the place of God." Now, I will just ask the opponents of scripture, how they can have the barefaced effrontery to ascribe the above prediction, penned upwards of five hundred years prior to the appearance of the man of sin, (the pope,) to the cunning craft of men? For, what, but divine inspiration, could possibly have foretold to such a nicety, the diabolical character of the impostor, and the season he would appear, namely, not till after the power of pagan Rome was destroyed; and there can be no mistake as to whom the prediction refers, because no other personage that has ever appeared on the earth, has so exactly answered to the description there given. He is said to "exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." Now, compare the above with the titles which that impious monster blasphemously assumes to himself, and by which he is addressed, namely, Dominus Deus Noster Papa—the Lord our God the Pope; Sanctissimus Pater, Sanctissimus Dei—Holy Father, Holy God.

Thus does the blasphemous pope exalt himself above all that is called God, and thus has he been, and is worshipped as God, sitting in the temple and usurping the place of God, and, while he had the power, causing kings to bow to him, and deposing from their thrones such as dare to set him

at defiance, and committing such to death who could not conscientiously receive his damnable doctrines—"doctrines of devils." And nothing can more clearly apply to the church of Rome, than the following quotation from St. Paul's first Epistle to Timothy, iv. 1, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." Now the church of Rome has been notorious for that peculiar and unnatural tenet, the forbidding her priests to marry wives; and so strict has she been in exacting obedience to that abominable doctrine of devils, that she has been known to bastardize the children of those priests who preferred the matrimonial state to the mock celibacy of the hypocritical croaking monks; as it is recorded, that in the year 1074, Pope Gregory (Hildebrand) prohibited the married priests from officiating in the service of the church, and forbad the laity to hear them perform mass; and so the unmarried monks were increased. And in the reign of King Henry the Second, Cardinal John De Crowe held a council against married priests, and exclaimed against the monstrous wickedness of rising from the side of a wh— (for so the filthy hypocrite called the wives of the priests) to perform mass; but on the evening of that very day he was detected in a brothel. "The affair was so *notorious*," says Matthew Paris, a monk of their

own church, "that it could not be denied; whilst the cardinal exchanged great honour for the profoundest disgrace."

Thus does the cruel, hypocritical, croaking, and beastly church of Rome, by her unscriptural ecclesiastical decrees, forbid her priests to marry; and thus does she, without any scriptural authority, (as far as respects her priesthood,) set aside an ordinance appointed of God as a type of the union of Christ and his church—an ordinance given to our first parents in Eden, when the Almighty Creator commanded them to be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth: which ordinance the priests of the Mosaic dispensation conformed to, as likewise the majority of the ministers of Christ, from the Day of Pentecost until the instalment of the first pope into his anti-christian office—an interval of upwards of five centuries. Therefore, the papists have neither scripture nor tradition for that abominable doctrine of devils. But, that matters not to the papistical church, who speaketh lies in hypocrisy—for, hypocritical lies does she speak, when she promulgates her doctrines of devils and traditions, for the word of God; and it is an historical fact, that, whilst her priests have professed celibacy, they, in their convents, have in past times (and no doubt do now) practised the most abominable crimes, contrary to nature; for, when Cromwell demolished the monasteries in England, it was discovered that fornication, joined with crimes most heinous—equal to, if not exceeding, those of Sodom and Gomorrah—were indulged in by those very monks and friars, who made such professions of celibacy; and those facts

at the time were published to the whole nation. And yet those deceitful hypocrites would cite, condemn, and execute persons for eating meat on a fast day—another abomination set forth in the text, “And commanding to abstain from meat, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.” Thus is the abomination of Rome to a nicety described in scripture prophecy.

But this antichrist, or “man of sin,” is to be destroyed—“And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” And, in spite of all the blasphemous superstitions, and bloody edicts of the papal church, the gospel of Christ still triumphs; and the infidel power which has sprung out of her vile apostacy, is at the present time making her desolate, and stripping her of her ill-gotten wealth, idolatrous pomp and influence. Thus is infidelity and popery of every description clashing together, and, like a potter’s vessel, dashing to shivers. The breakers are come up against her, and the “man of sin” is nearly stripped of the power which he has for centuries wielded over the nations of the earth; and the pope, who used to depose kings at his pleasure, and at whose anathemas the kings of the earth used to tremble, is now looked upon as an infamous impostor, or spiritual mountebank—and God grant that the time may soon arrive, when his power will be totally annihilated. But, at the present time popery is spreading most alarmingly; it seems to be mixed up with almost every thing in our nation, whether political or religi-

cus. "The treacherous dealer" is dealing treacherously—the "man of sin" is now transforming himself into an angel of light. And that cruel church is described in Rev. xvii. 3, as "a woman sitting upon a scarlet-coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns ;"..."arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations of the Earth."..."Drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus."

Thus is the church described, whose head is the "man of sin," the pope, full of names of blasphemy, who, in the eighth verse, is called "the beast that was and is not"—that is, the beast that was before in another form, but now is not in that form, inasmuch as pagan Rome was the scourge of the nations, and the enemy of the saints of God ; papal Rome, though different in form, is the same beast—the same in nature, although transformed into another shape ; for, as the pontiffs of pagan Rome assumed to themselves titles of the superlative degree, and required their subjects to adore them as gods, styled themselves Pontifex Maximus, Highest Pontiff, so the pope, the "man of sin," likewise assumes to himself the blasphemous titles of Sanctissimus Pater, Sanctissimus Dei—Most Holy Father, Most Holy God ; Sanctissimus Dominus, Most Holy Lord ; Rex regum, King of kings ; Sponsus Ecclæsiæ, Husband of the Church ;—and cruel and bloody husbands have

they always been; witness the Spanish inquisition, the massacre of the Waldenses, the bloody crusades—all by order of the pope of Rome, the “man of sin,” the son of perdition; who now is transforming himself into an angel of light, by sending his deceitful Jesuits among all classes, with the cry of liberty, while his express object is to bring us under his cruel domination; and, to accomplish which, his hypocritical croaking Jesuits are sowing every species of sedition and heresy amongst us; and the whole nation has been bewitched with their cry. For it is, and always has been, the policy of that “treacherous dealer” the church of Rome—the “mother of harlots,” drunk “with the blood of the saints”—where she could not, or cannot conquer by force, to do it by fraud; and always has she had her adulterous eye upon our nation; and there has never been a time since the Reformation, in which she has not by every means in her power been trying to regain the power which she once possessed over our British empire. For it is my firm opinion, that all the intolerance which has ever existed in the church of England, (as established by law,) by which thousands of her conscientious members were forced to dissent from her communion, and that every species of sectarian delusion which unhappily distracts the whole church, may be laid to the charge of the papistical, hypocritical, jacobinical Jesuits; and never has there been a time in the history of the reformed church of England, since she first broke loose from the trammels of Rome, in which a nation, we have been in greater danger of falling under her power, than the time present. The

Laodicean state of the church, when she is boasting that she is rich and increased in goods; when she hath a name to live while she is dead; when all classes, both church and dissent, are full of the bustle of religion, while but very few indeed are influenced by the example of Christ. For, is it not a fact, that while the professing church at large are with their mouths proclaiming the gospel of Christ, they are practically the cruel oppressors of the poor, the frequenters of theatres for vain amusements, the votaries of the card table, and so on. And in the midst of all, the papistical emissaries of "the mother of harlots," considering such a state of the protestant church a favourable opportunity for the accomplishment of their diabolical designs, are trying to sap the foundation of our protestant state, and destroy every thing that is protestant in the land; and thousands of dissenters, infidels, and nominal churchmen, have they persuaded to believe their lie—that the church of Rome is not the bloody church she was in times past, and which the word of God describes her. And sorry am I to see protestants helping to throw a veil over her dark and diabolical deeds, by trying to insinuate that the plain historical records of her treacherous cruelty are not founded on facts. Alas, alas, for our protestant church, if she should be persuaded universally to believe that lie; soon then should we have our beloved country overrun with a set of hypocritical mountebanks, in the form of monks and friars; and, then, soon should we see the humble followers of Christ, who could not conform to her idolatrous worship, led to the stake to be burned, or dispatched by some other means

perhaps more cruel. For, so sure as she was drunk with the blood of the saints in times past, so sure has she not become sober yet; and all her whining hypocritical sophistry is only a stratagem to obtain another drink of "the blood of the saints," before she expires. But let not protestants forget her past treachery—let her bloody deeds never be blotted out from the book of remembrance—let it be ever remembered by protestants, that in England, France, Spain, and Italy, the blood of nine hundred thousand souls was sacrificed to the strumpet of Rome, and two hundred thousand in Ireland. And then let them take into account the savage ferocity of the papists (instigated by the popish priests) in Ireland against protestantism, and the brutish murders there committed in the present day; and surely they are together sufficient evidence to convince any reasonable mind that the church of Rome thirsts for "the blood of the saints" still. A church full of idolatrous ceremonies, contrary to the word of God, as, for instance, her worshipping of images, her adoration and invocation of the Virgin Mary, contrary to the word of God; 1 Tim. ii. 5, which saith, there is but "one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." And in Acts iv. 12, "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

Yet hath that abominable church multiplied mediators upon mediators, whom she incessantly invokes. And now, having noticed them, I will just mention her abominable exorcisms and mystical incantations, in her ceremonies of making

holy water, holy cream, &c. &c. And, as a specimen of their blasphemous incantations, I will here record the ceremony called *Benedictio Fontis*, extracted from the *Missale Romanum*, that is, service book of the church of Rome, *Platin's edition, 8vo. printed at Antwerp, A.D. 1682*, p. 273 to 285.*

“The priest in one part of his incantation is directed to divide the water in the form of a cross, with an extended hand, and immediately to wipe it with a cloth. (p. 277.) In another part of it he touches the water again with his hand—(p. 279)—a little farther, he makes three crosses upon the font, (p. 280)—and in page 281, he is directed to divide the water with his hand, and to pour it out towards the four quarters of the world. Afterwards, the priest is directed to change his voice, (that is, to cease the incantation,) and to proceed in the tone of reading, (p. 282.) After a short prayer, he breathes three times upon the water, in the form of a cross; and after proceeding a little farther in his prayer, he is to drop a little wax into the water. He is afterwards (p. 283) to take the wax out of the water, and then, again to dip it down deeper, while he repeats a little louder, ‘*Descendat in hanc plenitudinem Fontis virtus Spiritus sancti*’—Let the virtue of the Holy Spirit descend into this fulness (or depth) of the Font; as if the virtue of the Holy Spirit was included in the wax. He afterwards takes the wax again out of the water (*ibid*) and a third time plunges it down even to the bottom, re-

* Vide Granville Sharp's Tracts on the Hebrew. Appendix, p. 138 to 139.

peating with a still louder voice, ' *Descendat.*' as before, and afterwards blows three times upon the water, according to this figure † and then proceeds with his incantation another sentence. Then the wax is to be taken again out of the water; for the blessed water is to be sprinkled upon the people, and in the houses, &c., without the wax, and before the oil and chrism (cream) is mixed with it—a prudent precaution to prevent the people's clothes and furniture being soiled with it. In page 284, the priest is directed to pour some of the oil of the catechumes into the water in the form of a cross, and afterwards to pour some of the chrism or cream, in like manner. After which he is to take both cruets of the said holy oil and chrism, and pour out some from both of them, in the form of a cross. He then mixes the oil itself with water, and sprinkles with his hand over the whole font."

Now, all this abominable " *commixtio*," as they call it, blasted across and across with the priest's breath, is afterwards with the unction of his spittle, applied to the noses and ears of persons baptised. And this is the filthy " *commixtio*" which the church of Rome has substituted instead of clean water, which is all the word of God requires.

But she is called the " *mystery of iniquity*;" and verily such mystical incantations prove her to be so. And all this is extracted from her own service-book, which contains much more ridiculous cabalistic mummery—as the *Benedictio Ovorum*, the blessing of eggs—*Benedictio Panis*, the blessing of bread—*Benedictio Novorum Fructuum*, the blessing of fruit—*Benedictio Candelarum*.

the blessing of candles: all equally as ridiculous and blasphemous.

Thus is the papistical church "the mystery of iniquity," and thus is she "full of abominations," and thus does she bewitch the world with her sorcery and damnable incantations, in direct opposition to the word of God. And it is no uncommon thing to see persons professing infidel principles taken therewith, although they designate simple christianity priestcraft. But infidelity is the very excrescence of popery, and popery is nothing else than infidelity, disguised with a mask of mock sanctity. And, though infidelity is the rod which God useth to scourge his church, when she backslideth from him; and although it is the iron rod with which he is breaking in pieces the popish Babylon; yet is infidelity essentially as vile and intolerant as popery. And, when infidelity gained the ascendancy in France, directly was all liberty of conscience destroyed; when, by a legal enactment they burned the Bible and abolished the sabbath, and indiscriminately murdered all that opposed their principles, whether good or bad, and set up a common strumpet as the goddess of reason—to such a pitch did they carry their hellish frenzy.

And if we look at home to the fruits of infidelity, in our own land, what do we see it bringing forth? Do we not see it setting up its idol of socialism?—a subtle "mystery of iniquity," adapted to, and designed for, the destruction of christianity, and the debauching of the morals of the rising generation, and the diffusing of adultery and incest throughout the community at large: and all under a mask of liberalism. And,

are they not making common cause with the papists, in seeking to overthrow the protestant institutions of the land? Popery and infidelity are the curses of our nation.

But the infidel and the papist will reply, if we are corrupt, is your protestant church perfect? To which I am conscientiously compelled to answer, No. And sorry am I to say, that the ministers of the established church of this realm have, in times past—with very few exceptions, when compared with the majority—been a disgrace to the name of christianity. But, notwithstanding that, I feel no difficulty in bringing the charge home to the infidel and popish party, because, at the time of the Reformation, it is a well known fact, that the papistical church employed all the hellish craft and sophistry she was possessed of, to instal her emissaries into the protestant church, and likewise to distract and bewilder her with every species of delusion; when the scriptural principles of the reformed church, instead of being carried out to the extent that the champions of the reformation intended they should have been, were exceedingly obstructed by the political feuds of the day; when a set of wicked men, infidels in practice, merely for the sake of filthy lucre, assumed the clerical garb, and tried to turn the church into a mere political state machine, to serve their base and worldly purpose.

Thus we see that infidels, notwithstanding all their declamations against priestcraft, (as they designate christianity,) are the very vilest of hypocrites, and whatever they touch they blast and wither up. And it is a singular fact, that so long as the protestant church of England permitted a

set of fox-hunting, gambling, swearing, play-going, revelling priests to officiate at her altars, so long was infidelity friendly to her; but no sooner was she, by the example of orthodox dissenters, roused up from her state of spiritual torpor, and induced boldly and earnestly to stand forth for the defence of the truths of the gospel, which her excellent ritual contains, than all the malice of infidelity was arrayed against her. Therefore, their spleen is aimed more directly at the purity of her doctrines, than at her carnality and corruption. But all their fury will only prove a furnace, from which she will after a while come forth purified. And already is she standing forth with a bold front against the papistical and infidel storm. And now is she sending forth her gospel streams (her magazines) in weekly abundance, to the dismay of the powers of darkness, and the edification of the lovers of truth and holiness, and the instruction of the ignorant,—with the hearty prayers and good wishes of all others that love God, though conscientiously dissenting from her communion. For the church of Christ collectively, though disunited in minor points, are one in spirit; for in Christ there is no distinction. And the love of Christ in the heart is the only principle which can constrain men to forego all party distinctions, and devote their time, their talents, their influence, and their property, for the glory of God and the good of their fellow-creatures, without any other reward in view than the approval of a clear conscience, and the satisfaction of knowing they are doing good. And frequently have I witnessed persons, who, while laudably engaged in such a work, have

(even by the individuals whose interest they were seeking) been insulted and grievously maltreated, despised, and slandered ; and still the love of God in their hearts has compelled them to go on, in spite of all opposition, knowing that their blessed Lord and Master suffered the same treatment from his own brethren—that “when he was reviled he reviled not again,” but commanded his disciples to love their enemies, and do good to those who despitefully used them. And such is the influence the love of Christ has upon those who possess it; it causes them to love all men for his sake. “And he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God; for God is love.” And such an one hath the Holy Spirit of God for his counsellor and guide; and by the light of that Spirit he is enabled to see the corruption of his own heart. Therefore, feeling that, and knowing that if it was not for the grace of God alone, which makes him to differ, he would be as vile in practice as others; he is thereby enabled to show mercy to, and forgive such as trespass against him.

Such is the effect which true christianity has upon the conduct of such as possess it. But is it so with infidelity? Where is their disinterested philanthropy, that they falsely boast of? Who has the present generation got to thank for the light and knowledge which is diffused through all ranks of society? is it papists or infidels? No, verily. For the papists, while they are forced to acknowledge the Bible to be the word of God, have locked up that very word from the laity, by prohibiting them from reading it, and by using it in the Latin tongue; and they have in every age, since the instalment of the first pope in the papal

chair, tried to keep the laity in ignorance, under the lying pretext that ignorance is the mother of devotion. And the present barbarous and superstitious ferocity and ignorance of those nations where popery is predominant, fully confirms these remarks.

And, what have infidels done towards the work? Was it them that first set about establishing Sunday schools, for the instruction of their fellow-creatures? was it them that first established societies for the relieving and comforting of the afflicted? No, verily, it was not. It was the very class of men they persecute, and stigmatize as knaves and hypocrites. Knaves and hypocrites there are among them, there is no doubt; because wicked and designing men are sure to assume that garb which will most effectually hide their villainy. And so there are plenty of knaves and hypocrites amongst professed radical reformers; but radical reform as to principle remains essentially the same—and christianity remains essentially the same; and there can be no true radical reform without christianity, because christianity is the very essence of reform. And, while the infidel reformer acts from expediency, the christian acts from principle; and, while the infidel by all his actions is only seeking self-indulgence, (as the modern abominable principle of socialism proves,) the true christian, at the sacrifice of many a temporal comfort, and the mortification of every sensual desire which would obstruct his course, goes steadily on, disseminating the blessed gospel of Christ, to the destruction of those unholy, sensual propensities, the indulgence of which are the curse of the earth, and which

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of reason, he walks by the example and instead of viewing himself by the nature, he examines himself by the Holy Spirit; and, instead of being in himself, and puffed up with pride at the superiority of intellect and moral sense, through the Holy Spirit making the inward depravity of his nature, himself before God, prays and strives by his Spirit for sanctification, that he may walk in the footsteps of Jesus here, and before him hereafter.

Now the true christian differ from the infidel. And, if infidels, instead of a word of God for the purpose of finding out to ridicule, would but honestly for the sake of finding out the truth, minds open to conviction, they would discern between true christianity and priestcraft. It is not truth they search for, but they "love darkness rather than light, for their deeds are evil." Therefore, they are blinded by their own vain sophistry than by conscience; consequently "they stumble, being disobedient thereto;" for they were appointed. And the word describes these characters as "scoffers, despisers of their own lusts." And St. Paul, in the 2nd Epis. iii. 1, concerning the last days, saith, "This know also, that in the last days shall come: for men shall be covetous, covetous, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unholiness, without natural affections, false accusers, incontinent,

fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady; high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God."

And, if ever there was a time when such characters more especially abounded, it is the time present; and in proportion as the above evil propensities have progressed, so in proportion has political embarrassment increased. And the reason why it should be so is obvious; because sin brings its own punishment. And if men will trample upon the bountiful providence of God, squander that away in the pursuit of vain pleasure, which they ought to use for the temporal and spiritual good of themselves and rising offspring; and, instead of setting a good example of industry and sobriety to the rising generation, become examples of immorality, drunkenness, and blasphemy; they must to a certainty feel the rod of God, either in mercy or in judgment: for whatsoever men sow, that will they reap. And that is the reason why God has given us the holy scriptures to read, and caused to be recorded therein the sinful infirmities, as well as the graces, of David and others, in order that after-generations might take warning or encouragement therefrom, and avoid those evils which brought them under the chastisements or judgments of God, and seek that grace which alone can capacitate us to love and hold communion with him, even the love of Christ in the heart, which surpasseth all understanding.

Such is the use for which the Bible was designed; and the humble follower of Christ finds to his comfort that the Bible is the book of books; for, let his condition or circumstances be what

they may, if he be hanging upon Christ, and thirsting for the Holy Spirit, and making him his comforter and guide, having no confidence in the flesh, he will be sure to find something suitable to his case, which will yield him solid comfort, with which all the collective pleasures of this world are not worthy to be compared. And if men would but make the word of God their constant text-book, they would find an unerring finger-post to direct them to true happiness, because it directs to God, the only source of happiness and holiness; for there can be no true happiness without holiness, and that every vain lover of worldly pleasure finds by experience, if they were but honest enough to acknowledge it.

But I must leave the opponents of scripture to their own reflections, and say a few words to the disciples of Christ, who do profess to know him, and the power of his resurrection; and I would ask, How standeth it with you, my brethren? are you adorning the doctrine you profess by walking blamelessly with him? are you standing forth as lights of the world? or, are you tampering with divine things, and trying to serve God and mammon at the same time? These are important questions.

THE PRESENT SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

The reason why the church is thronged with persons undecided, and in doubt as to their interest in the covenant, is because they will not examine themselves faithfully upon those points, lest they should be compelled to give up some darling lust, or sacrifice something which their hearts are wedded to. Therefore, when iniquity abounds, their love to Christ becomes cold. O, that there was but more closet prayer, and watching unto prayer, than there is ; then there would not be such halting and doubting as there is among christians. But, alas, this is a day when men like to speculate upon the word of God, and get their heads filled with vain delusions, rather than by a practical use of it to attain to the sanctification of the Spirit. They pray for sanctification ; they beg of God to cleanse them from pride, covetousness, and so on ; but, through not watching unto prayer, they do not discern the answer when it comes, though perhaps they receive it immediately. And the reason why they do not discern it is obvious ; they expect or look for some magical change, forgetting that God ordinarily worketh by means. Therefore, when he, in answer to their prayer, sendeth something to mortify their pride, immediately they are thrown into a perturbed state of mind, declaiming against the person or circumstance which has occasioned their mortification, and, instead of being humbled before God for the hidden corruption of their heart, which the present

trial has brought to light, and thanking him for his fatherly chastisement, they add malice to their pride, by encouraging a spirit of revenge, which is the offspring of pride; so that their hearts become more hardened than ever. And all this follows in consequence of their not watching unto prayer; for if they had watched, they would have perceived that the present mortification was an immediate answer thereto. For Christ having tasted death for every man, knows exactly what kind of treatment the natural disposition of every man requires; for he does nothing by chance: but one would think by the conduct of some professing christians, that all he did was by chance. They talk about trusting in Christ; and, yet, when he chasteneth them for their profit, they fly in his face like demons; and, while they profess him by word of mouth, refuse to walk as he walked. Such men's faith is only the devils' faith—for they believe so far. But the man that hath a living faith in Christ, hath a faith that worketh by love, that purifieth the heart; because it is a faith that layeth hold on him, that feedeth upon him, that layeth hold of his words and keepeth them; a faith that enables a man to cast his all upon him; a faith begotten in him by the operation of the Holy Spirit of adoption; a lively faith that makes Christ the pole-star by which he steers at all times, and under all circumstances; a faith which fully assures him that all the circumstances and trials of his life are according to the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure. And, knowing that Christ has the ordering of, and is the Angel of that covenant, and "is able to present him faultless before the pre-

sence of his glory with exceeding joy," he is enabled joyfully to submit to his righteous discipline; and, like the boy who was so cheerful at sea, although the ship was battling with a dreadful tempest, and all the rest on board quaking for fear, when asked what made him so cheerful, replied, "My father's at the helm." So the true christian, whilst the men of the world, and mere formal professors, are trembling for fear, because of the awful aspect of the times, is enabled to rejoice amidst it all, and is filled with a holy confidence at the thought that Christ sits at the helm.

Thus does the man that prays in the spirit, and watches unto prayer, receive joy and comfort, which the worldlings and mere nominal professors know nothing about; for "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." Rom. viii. 14. And none but the children of God can enter into the secret of God; for "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant," Psa. xxv. 14; which "covenant is ordered in all things, and sure," 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

Now, we know that among men a covenant is binding on both parties,—even so is it with the covenant of grace; for as Christ hath bound himself by a covenant to "give eternal life to as many as believe in him," even so is every believer bound to the conditions of that covenant, to "walk, not after the flesh," (that is the carnal delights of the mind,) "but after the Spirit;"—which Spirit is a spirit of meekness, patience, love, humility, long-suffering, &c. : by which marks a man may soon examine himself, whether

he be in the faith, and ascertain which way he is walking. For if he be in the faith, he must produce those fruits of the Spirit, in a greater or less degree. There can be no bearing of fruit to eternal life, except we be in Christ; "for without me," saith our Lord, John xv. 5, "ye can do nothing." A cold profession of christianity avail-eth nothing: except we put on Christ, and are clothed with his righteousness, all our works, let them be ever so great, are dead works; and all professions of Christ which spring not from a sense of our own corruption, and the all-sufficiency of Christ to save us therefrom, and a thorough hatred to sin, a thirst for holiness, accompanied with a sense of reconciliation with God, through what Christ hath done for us; are but like the prating of a parrot, which, although it may speak like a child, is but a parrot still. And sorry am I to see so much prating in the church, and so little practice; and more sorry still am I to feel so much deficiency in myself, notwithstanding all my spiritual advantages of reading and studying the word of God. O, that I could feel my soul more alive to him, and more of the love of Christ in my heart, to enable me to be an humble means of stirring up others to stand forth publicly and boldly in the strength of Christ, to combat the horrible delusions which are deluging the land at this present time; and, thank God, he is lifting up the standard of his Spirit against them, and a most fearful struggle appears to be approaching. Therefore it is a time of decision, when all masks are being torn off, when wicked designing men, who have for a long season hid their pernicious principles for policy sake behind some specious

mask, are now throwing off all precaution, and appearing in their true characters, according to the words of Christ, Mat. xiii. from the 40th ver. "So shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire : there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

I believe that all commentators are agreed that these are the latter times, that we are drawing nigh to the end of this world, or age, noticed in the text. And if we look at the present signs of the times, I think that nothing can more exactly correspond with the prediction of our Lord in the text, than the present aspect of the times. Do we not see in the gathering together of the papists, the infidels, the sensualists, and the seditious, under their several leaders, the very fulfilment of the text? and are not those several classes cast out into outer darkness—the darkness of infidelity? and are they not gnashing their teeth with vexation, because they cannot root out christianity from the earth, and take vengeance on those who propagate it? and do they not weep and wail because they cannot gratify to the fullest extent the abominable propensities of their vitiated minds? and are they not tormented perpetually with the fire of wrath kindled by their own evil passions, and kept alive by the political demagogues of this day, who are gathering them together in bundles?—and how long the gathering will go on before the fulness of the iniquity of the Gentiles will be accomplished, I know not; but this I know, that the promise is, that in this

darkness that is gathering, the righteous shall “shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their father,” 43rd ver.

But it is a fearful time for the hypocrites in Zion, the false rotten-hearted professors. O, ye traitors in the camp, ye Judases, hearken to the voice of the Lord by his prophet Isaiah, and hear your disgraceful doom, xxxiii. 14, “The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites.” Such will be the state of the hypocrites in Zion in the time of judgment, when God will give the people up to themselves, to be filled with their own ways—when the iniquity of the Gentiles shall be accomplished. And how soon that may be, we know not. O, it will be a day of trial indeed—concerning which the prophet asks in the same verse, “Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?” Solemn questions, which the three following verses answer, “He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppressions, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil; he shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks; bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure. Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off. Thine heart shall meditate terror.”

Thus we see that it is only those who are living in Christ, that can dwell in these everlasting (perpetual) burnings; the hypocrite’s hope will melt away like wax at such a time; for, like

Judas, having only professed Christ for the world, he will betray him for the world. In such a time he will throw away all his specious profession of religion, and so make shipwreck of faith. O, then, how needful is it for every man to examine himself, to see how matters stand with him—to be up and be doing—to be zealous for the cause of Christ, not with a blind fanatical zeal, unaccompanied with knowledge, but with a life conformed to the gospel of Christ, shine forth as lights to the world, so that the world may take knowledge of them that they have been with Jesus. For, if we may judge from the present state of the world, the day, the great and terrible day of the Lord draweth nigh, as symbolized by St. John the Divine, as shown to him by vision, which he describes thus, Rev. vi. 12, “And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sack-cloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; and the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind: and the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places: and the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”

It is evident, that in the above prophetic vision, is figuratively set forth a most notable revolution in the ruling powers of the world, namely, heathen Rome; when the stone cut out of the mountain, according to Daniel's prophecy, brake in pieces the toes of the great regal image, composed of the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver and the gold—(which final blow to that power is described as an earthquake)—at which period the sun and the moon, and all the host of heaven, were objects of adoration, in the heathen worship. But, in consequence of the Emperor Constantine being converted to christianity, all that heathenish idolatry was by him abolished, when he removed the seat of government from the site where old Rome stood upon her seven hills, to Constantinople, the present capital of papal Rome, built upon seven mountains likewise. So is she the beast that was and is not, in more than one point of view; and first, (as I have noticed before,) as old pagan Rome was, though under a different form, a cruel and bloody enemy of the church of Christ, but transformed into another shape, and shifted to another place, and set upon seven hills, so papal Rome, the beast transformed into another shape, is essentially the same beast, and possessing the same cruel propensity: and, secondly, she is the beast that was and is not in another point of view, for she is the old beast of Rome who once was for a time reformed, but since has apostatized from pure christianity, and become the mystery of iniquity, the mother of harlots, the scarlet whore, drunk with the blood of the saints. Therefore, as by the victorious career of Constantine the worshippers of the sun, the moon,

and the stars, were abolished, when the political heaven, &c. were swept away, and wrapped together as a scroll—so was that event a true emblem of the final triumph of the true church of Christ, over the popish Babylon, and all the cruel and idolatrous despots of the earth who have committed fornication with her; when all the popish and infidel crew, all the cruel oppressors of the poor, and enemies of Christ and his church, of every description, will have to drink the very dregs of the cup of wrath which they have been filling, as most strikingly set forth by the prophet Isaiah, 34th chap., in the following strong language: “Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it. For the indignation of the Lord is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies; he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcases, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig tree. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven.”

Here is apparently set forth the final destruction of the kingly governments of the earth, the mountains (kings) which shall be given to the slaughter; as likewise all the host of the political heavens, the subordinate judges, magistrates, &c. who have not done justly, nor ruled in the fear of God, but according to their own corruptible

will and pleasure. Ah, that will be an awful time indeed, come when it may ; and it appears to be fast approaching, for all the monarchs of the earth appear to be tottering upon their thrones—all seem to have a fearful foreboding of some dreadful convulsion close at hand. Spain, Portugal, France, Turkey, and Egypt, are wasting away, in consequence of internal fires burning within them, and preying upon their very vitals—and so are expiring by political suicide. Papal Rome appears to be making her last struggle, previous to her final overthrow. Our own beloved nation is convulsed from one end to the other, as the fruits of her unholy alliance with the papistical power ; for, ever since the passing of the Catholic emancipation bill, have we been more distracted than ever we were before, since the Reformation ; so that to be allied to that abominable church, is to be cursed ; and, in consequence thereof, are we as a nation partaking of her plagues, and all which God has suffered to come upon us for our national wickedness ; as there never was a time in England, in which the poor were so grievously oppressed as the present, when poverty is considered and punished as a crime ; when the cries of the hireling, who is robbed of his wages, and the honest, fair-dealing, toiling tradesman, who is robbed of his lawful and just profits, by the wealthy professing christians, are ascending up to the Lord of hosts ; when poor-houses are become prisons ; when instruments to degrade and insult the poor are affixed upon the church doors ; when husbands are torn from their wives, and parents from their children—the very spirit of popery, only mani-

fested in another form, and performed by men professing to be christians, fancying themselves to be patterns of virtue : just like the papistical church, who boasteth of her good works and merits, while at the same time she is striving to reduce the human race to the most abject state of mental and corporeal slavery.

Thus is protestant England becoming partner with her in crime, as likewise in her judgments ; and most rapidly are we, as a nation, falling into that poverty-stricken, degraded, and distracted condition in which all the popish nations are at the present time. For all systems of idolatry brutalize mankind ; and poverty, distraction, blasphemy, degradation, indolence, infidelity, and murder of the deepest dye, are the certain attendants of the spirit of popery, let it manifest itself in what sect or party it may, as the present degraded, distracted state of popish Ireland fully corroborates. Not that I, as an individual, think that the papistical power will ever recover the influence it formerly possessed in this nation ; because, while the church of Rome is joining league with the infidel power to overthrow protestantism, infidelity is watching the opportunity to overthrow both ; and, as infidelity and popery are the two powers who use carnal weapons to accomplish their purposes, and as infidelity is the strongest of the two, and bitterly opposed to priestcraft, it appears the most probable, that the last struggle the church of Christ will be called to suffer, will be with the infidel power. And, if we may judge of the tender mercies of infidels, from their conduct at the French revolution (notwithstanding all the principal actors in that

tragedy of rapine and murder were the professed advocates of liberty,) we may expect no more tolerance from them than from the papal church; and both of them are treacherous dealers, who are dealing treacherously and subtilely. And a more deceitful and subtle scheme could not have been invented, than the proposed system of national education,—advocated alike by infidels, papists, unitarians, and socinians, all whose principles are proposed to be amalgamated together; the evil consequence of which amalgamation our protestant church is fully aware of, thank God, and is strongly opposing, knowing full well that each sectarian party is hoping for the ascendancy, that so they may finally abolish protestantism from the education of the land.

Thus are the treacherous dealers dealing treacherously. And no greater evidence can be required, to prove that God alone is the defence of protestantism, than that she goes on prospering, notwithstanding all those turbulent spirits are arrayed against her; because, if the number of protestant christians, both high church and dissent, be compared with the myriads living in idolatry and infidelity, they would be as a handful of salt thrown into the ocean. Therefore, nothing but the mighty power of God is the defence of the true church of Christ.

So I conclude this work, by entreating my fellow christians to put away every sin that most easily besetteth them—“to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with their God;” lest, in awful judgment for our national crying sins, he remove the gospel candlestick from us, and give us up.

as he did the Jews of old, his peculiar people, for their sins, into the hands of their enemies; which, God grant may not be the case with beloved England, is the hearty prayer of the author,

BENJAMIN SHILLINGFORD.

THE END.

